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The PASSING SHOW

2D

- SAVARAN
- A. J. CRONIN
- W. J. Passingham
- George I. Joseph
- Vincent Brome
- Francis Beeding

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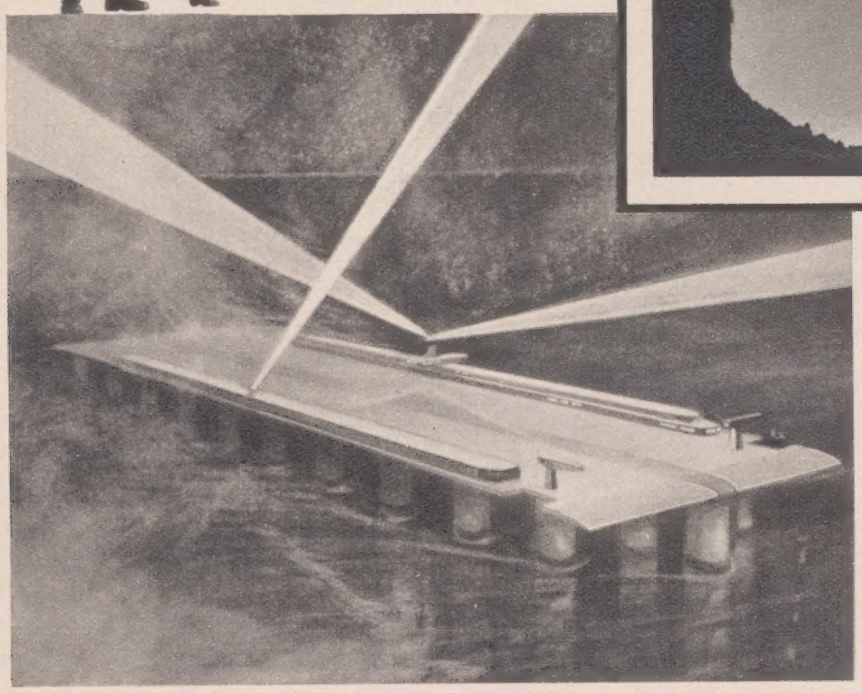
IN SEARCH of the Half-Way Islands

by Vincent BROME



● SUCH islands as this will enable the air liner to girdle the world in a few days. Left, the film version of a floating half-way island in the Atlantic.

ONLY the sounds of the wind and sea had ever disturbed the utter peace of Facos Island. There was something a little unreal about its beauty. A delicate fragment poised in that great waste of water, it had the sparkling freshness of some fairy thing, newly emerged from the crystalline seas. But Facos Island was a place of a thousand yesterdays. Men had come and gone, civilisations risen and decayed, while the seas swept around the tiny island.

An occasional explorer had lingered to admire its beauty, and twice there had been talk of commercial exploitation. But the island remained inviolate. Then came the aeroplane. That little island, unnoticed and without value, suddenly assumed new importance.

The aeroplane could not traverse vast stretches of landless ocean with any degree of real safety. Amazing flights were successfully accomplished, but they were isolated adventures, remote from regular air services.

Experts of the leading aeroplane companies foregathered and a variety of suggestions were put forward and dismissed. Now a solution has been found. A solution centred in the tiny Facos Island. Fifty similar fragments of land, a mere rash on the surface of the seas, will soon be attracting the attention of the world; they will be vital links in a series of trans-oceanic air services. Engineers, builders and aviation experts will descend on them with their paraphernalia of tools, bricks and instruments, to transform island paradises into efficient air stations.

By breaking trans-oceanic flights at two or more points, air stations of this kind will open up routes hitherto impossible even to giant flying boats.

Recently Pan American Airways began to take advantage of the fact. The Pacific offered them a wealth of islands suitable for air bases, particularly along proposed routes from San Francisco to Manila and Yokohama. An air base had already been established at Honolulu, a distance of 2,098 miles from San Francisco, but between Honolulu and Yokohama lay another 3,390 miles of ocean.

No aeroplane can regularly negotiate that vast distance non-stop with any degree of safety, and it is hardly likely that anyone would think of running a regular, non-stop service between these two points. However, there are several groups of islands just off the suggested course that are well-suited to the purpose of air stations.

Fourteen hundred miles from Honolulu lies the tiny island called Midway Island, and another 1,250 miles beyond that is the still smaller fragment known as Wake Island.

A short while ago the steamer *Northaven* left San Francisco to investigate the possibilities of establishing air stations in the Pacific.

Its first object, Midway Island, lying half-way between America and Asia, was first discovered by Captain N. C. Brooks in 1859. Actually, the island is made up of two small fragments of land supported by a circular coral reef, in turn the product of thousands of coral polyps. The action of the wind piling up sand in the centre of this reef, gradually built the islands. Almost continuous for a distance of eighteen miles, the reef has one gap three miles in width on the Western side.

Until the Commercial Pacific Cable Company established a station at Midway Island, it was uninhabited, and only a few dwarf bushes with here and there a patch of coarse grass, relieved the dreary succession of windswept sand-dunes. The first few inhabitants found it impossible to grow anything from the natural soil of the island. The pitiless sand blasts caused by the wind withered every vestige of vegetation before it had a chance to develop.

Now, on Midway Island, you see tidy cottages standing over smooth lawns, with neat paths and flowers in vivid contrast to the dazzling beauty of the sea beyond. Still, there are only twelve inhabitants.

Midway Island has an ideal climate. Song-birds have been imported and canaries sing in the most unexpected places. Flocks of sea birds as big as geese live on the shores of the island.

Among this simple natural life *Northaven* discharged engineers and technical experts with over five thousand tons of material. Almost immediately they set to work on new landing stages and incidental buildings necessary to an air station. Remote and forgotten Midway Island echoed to the sounds of modern machinery. Whirlwind activity roused it from drowsy peace. And soon, throughout the whole world the name and nature of Midway Island will spread; become as familiar as those of our great seaports; dragged from obscurity into the limelight by the aeroplane.

From Midway Island *Northaven* made her way to Wake Island. Once again engineers and mechanics began work on structures totally alien to this fragment of coral. A modern guest house to accommodate passengers began to take shape, and a whole variety of growths appeared overnight.

Discovered from *Prince William Henry* in 1796, the position of Wake Island was fixed by the United States Exploring Expedition under Wilkes in 1841. A low coral formation rising scarcely eight feet from the water, it enclosed a lovely lagoon alive with the beauty of tropical fish. The Eastern part of the Island nourished patches of heavy brush, but coconuts did not flourish there, nor was there any supply of fresh water. Lying near the course of ships from America and Hawaii to China, it looked, in earlier days, as though periodically submerged by the sea, but as far as is known, that does not happen to-day.

Next in the line of air bases came the Island of Guam, fourteen hundred miles away. Mountainous and fringed with coral reefs, Guam is heavily wooded and well supplied with water. Like the

(*continued on next page*)

CONTINUING

Half-Way Islands

islands of Wake and Midway, Guam has an ideal climate. Clear, hot sunshine is almost continuous, but daily showers prevent its becoming unpleasant. At noon the temperature generally ranges around 95 degrees, and for that time of day there is little variation throughout the whole year. Although the soil is comparatively poor, being for the most part clay over coral limestone, they get good crops of maize, rice, coffee and yams.

The natives, known as Chamorros, are an amiable, superstitious race, eager, when last I was there, to be thought as American as possible. The older inhabitants still wore the primitive attire of the Philippines, but the younger women had adapted American ideas of dress, as understood from a variety of highly prized fashion magazines.

The wide, warm streets of Agana in Guam carry an odd assortment of vehicles, ranging from a modern motor car to a bull cart.

The patron saint of Guam, a wonderful ivory virgin, was still looked on by the natives, I found, as a human being of flesh and blood, alive and breathing. Known as Santa Marian Camalin, or Saint Mary of the Cupboard, the history of this virgin goes back two hundred years. According to their local poem, a Spanish soldier came on her in the sea near Merizo, with crabs holding candles before her. For many years she was carefully preserved in a wall cupboard by the garrison at Agana.

Reverently lifted from this seclusion in 1825, they placed her at the top of a church altar, and there she remained to protect the inhabitants against the pestilence and earthquake. With the twentieth century the Chamorros' implicit faith in Santa Marian never wavered, and to-day they still look to her in time of trouble.

From their extensive survey of these islands in the Pacific, Pan American Airways mapped out their remarkable flights from San Francisco to Manila, which started a few months ago. During the next few years thousands of people will automatically pause at these islands, the little colonies formed, or in process of formation, will develop rapidly, and modern devices for comfort and convenience will make their appearance among the crude peasant homes.

Just how rapid this transformation can be is shown by the Imperial Airways station at Mpika, in the heart of the jungle. A short while ago Mpika was cut off from the rest of the world for several months of the year, but now an up-to-date rest house dominates a busy air station.

Imperial Airways are not neglecting opportunities offered by small islands for trans-oceanic flights. Their latest scheme in connection with Pan American Airways is a service across the Atlantic employing the Azores and Bermudas. A group of three hundred and sixty small islands, the Bermudas lie about five hundred and eighty miles east of North Carolina and 677 miles south-east of New York. Celebrated for their fine climate and scenery, they are a favourite winter resort for Americans. The coral reefs of Bermuda are farther from the equator than any other living coral formation, a fact explained by the warm waters of the Gulf Stream.

The first experimental flights are to be undertaken soon. Arrangements have been made between British, Canadian, Irish and American air and postal authorities, for the delivery of mails over this route. Tentative proposals have also been put forward for a great new flying base somewhere on the South Coast, to receive the trans-Atlantic flying boats.

Americans will use the Martin Ocean Clipper type of 'plane for this service, and a special flying-boat is being built for Imperial Airways. Meanwhile, the Government of Bermuda concentrates on the construction of an air port.

The United States Government has spent considerable time and money experimenting with artificial islands. This scheme is not nearly so fantastic as it may at first seem. Mr. E. Armstrong, an American engineer, conceived the idea of linking England and America with a chain of artificial islands. A careful examination of the scheme brought to light a dozen unsuspected difficulties. Undeterred, Armstrong constructed a large scale model of the islands he visualised. In due course it was moored in Chesapeake Bay and subjected to severe tests. It survived them all.

● These islands are apt for idling, but one day soon air liners from across the ocean will be circling overhead.

Originally, Armstrong intended his islands for refuelling stations, but the result of his test swelled his ambition. He foresaw a time when these islands would support rest houses and little colonies of people. Bearing this possibility in mind, he designed a monster island nearly a mile in length and three hundred feet wide. Having two sections, the greater mass was to be submerged, and from this steel pillars would rise to support another, lighter mass. Open-work steel pillars were to be used to lessen the resistance at water level, and the topmost platform was to tower sixty feet above the highest wave known.

Between the two main sections sub-decks were to be introduced, with hangars and possibly a rest house. To support the whole colossal structure, Mr. Armstrong designed twenty-eight buoyancy tanks floating one hundred feet beneath the water, and for anchorage he had immense steel-wire cables fastened to fifteen hundred ton weights.

The whereabouts of these seadromes were to be made known by means of directional radiobeams, and their construction was such that they would continually head into the wind, assuring safe landings. No difficulty of international law arises over these islands because they would be subject to existing international marine laws. 'Planes from any country could use them, either by regular arrangement, or casually, by the payment of a small toll.

Perhaps the worst difficulty is the problem of anchorage. Beyond the immense quantity of steel cable necessary, the drag would be terrific, and it is debatable whether the enormous weights Armstrong proposes to use, would be proof against a really big Atlantic storm. Again, a snapped cable might send an inert mass weighing thousands of tons staggering into the path of trans-Atlantic liners.

The German liner *Westfalen*, stationed in the South Atlantic, has been used very successfully as a floating aerodrome for German flying boats, and the Public Works Administration in the United States has allotted £300,000 for further experiments with floating islands. The money is to be used for the construction of a quarter-section island, behind the Delaware breakwater. This would then be towed five hundred miles out into the Atlantic, until they reach a point on the thirty-ninth latitude, which is the proposed situation for the first floating air station. Here they would test the island exhaustively.

Leaving the Atlantic, another island likely to become of considerable importance in aviation, is Borneo, for it lies within two days by air of Singapore. Here Britain holds the territory of Sarawak. Recently Colonel Turner, Director of Works and Buildings in the Air Ministry, arranged a four thousand miles survey flight including this island. Scattered throughout the world are a whole variety of other islands which, if not already in process of survey, must eventually become of vital importance. For instance, so far as I can discover, no great developments have so far involved the Pitcairn and Pago Islands, yet they appear from the map to occupy strategic positions. Most of the larger islands in the Southern Pacific archipelagoes already have the attention of air experts.

Meanwhile, Imperial Airways will shortly put into operation the extension of their system from Penang to Hong Kong, New Zealand will be connected by regular air services to Australia and thus to the Empire routes, which finally reach London. In turn, Pan American Airways will connect New Zealand with the United States, and the latest Anglo-American agreement covers the Atlantic, bringing us once again to London. All of which foreshadows a regular flying service around the world, linked together by dozens of half-forgotten islands.

Guinea Airways, a British company, is considering a scheme for connecting various islands under British protection in the Western Pacific. A special conference called for this purpose was attended by delegates from Australia and New Zealand, while Queen Salote, who governs many of the islands involved, gave the scheme whole-hearted support. The original idea was to start the air service from New Guinea, connecting up Norfolk Island with the Gilbert, Solomon, Tonga and other islands.

Beautiful tropic retreats ablaze with riotous colours and vegetation, the Tongas have considerable commercial possibilities as yet quite unexploited. Even the largest islands are visited by steamers only once in five or six weeks, and some of the smaller islands seem to be entirely forgotten by the outside world. Norfolk Island is a small spot in the South Pacific about 930 miles from Sydney and four hundred miles from New Zealand, with a length of five miles and a width of three. Its natives are happy, contented people, very kind and courteous, with a great love of music, dancing and sport.

Taxation on the island is extremely light. Some years ago a special road tax was levied, which required all male islanders between the ages of 21-55 to spend fifteen days during each year repairing the roads. At that time, too, the whole island was policed by one officer from the New South Wales police force. There was little money in circulation. Intoxicants were unknown except for medicinal purposes. In their homes the natives used a mixture of Tahitian and bad English, but to visitors they spoke English tolerably well.

Among the deeper valleys of the island, the undergrowth is riotous. Lianas abound, binding the vegetation into thick jungle. Great pines are out-soared by giant fern-trees, with their umbrella-like tops sometimes reaching a hundred feet in the air. Beautifully wild and secluded, these valleys are apt places for idling. But one day soon, a dusky-skinned native, dreaming among them in sunshine and gentle abandon, will hear a subdued humming creep into his solitude.

Presently, a mere mote of silver will broaden in the sun's rays, take shape and come roaring splendidly over his head. Maybe the sight of an aeroplane will not be altogether unfamiliar to him, and when it circles, preparatory to landing, he will merely feel vaguely uneasy.

I wonder how long it must be before he realises that this five thousand pounds worth of drumming fabric and metal has come to change his life, his home, and perhaps his nature.

"And you'll make terms with a—jailbird?"

SAVARAN finds a Kingdom

POWER *of the* EYES

by Douglas Newton

BOMA ALI, of whom men knew nothing save that his manners were smooth, his eyes unclean, and that he had too much money for so flat a nose, met Savaran by appointment in Bela-Bela.

There, in an inner room of The House of Shy Delights and over the bank notes of four nations, he put forward certain proposals.

What they were, history and Savaran will never tell, partly because the eagle-faced adventurer has a rooted distaste for discussing dirt, but mainly because Boma Ali left The House of Shy Delights with violence and by a window before these proposals were half disclosed.

With him went his bank notes, crammed down his throat, and that in itself is a testimonial to the nature of Boma Ali's business, for, as usual, Savaran was on his uppers and not likely to reject any reasonably illegal offence that meant cash.

Boma Ali continued to be true to self even after he had picked his fat carcass from the tropic mud into which the steel-wire arms had so casually tossed him, for ridding his mouth of both the kennel and the currency filth he gave certain orders of stealthy and malicious intent.

As a result the bizarre soldier of fortune was pulled up dead that night on his way to the discreet room where he could lie hid from the many warrants current for him in the Malaria Colony.

A cry for help came from a dark court.

Savaran being Savaran, the cry being feminine, and the door to the court open, there could be but one reaction. He leapt to the rescue.

Thereupon fifteen sinewy *dogari* police, waiting in the dark, fell upon him with all the ardour of men who knew that there was a reward of five thousand pounds English for the capture of so redoubtable a law breaker.

Major Verreker, Chief of Police to the Malaria Colony, learnt the news of Savaran's arrest in a long code telegram next morning. He was not pleased. He had other and uglier problems to grapple with just then, and Savaran as a prisoner was like having a parcel of dynamite on the point of explosion under one's chair when one wanted to give one's mind to other things.

And then, strangely, Verreker stopped swearing as he decoded the message, while his narrow, brown face became queerly still. The subaltern in charge at Bela-Bela had ended his report with these words: "Men won't talk but there's hint that Boma Ali betrayed Savaran."

Verreker mused over that sentence for half an hour, thinking both of Boma Ali and Savaran's reputation for paying back treachery. Then he cut all engagements, including a luncheon party not without bearing on his promotion, and flew to Bela-Bela by aeroplane.

Savaran, chained and in a cell certified escape proof, did the honours like a king. Savaran is of the type that makes magnificent gestures even on the guillotine. Verreker, dapper, neat, firm-eyed met him on his own footing. He knew and respected the capacities of this gypsy genius too well to play the heavy policeman.

"Not a happy business, Savaran," he said, as he sat on the stone *mastaba*. "I don't like these jackal traps."

"Lift your feet from the floor," grinned the lean man, taking Verreker's cigarette. "The last guest in this suite was the father of all lice. My capture? Don't worry about it. The unhappiness won't be ours. Savaran will deal with the fellow."

"You know it was Boma Ali, then?" said Verreker, with the outsize innocence of the policeman.

"Boma Ali?" echoed Savaran, but his keen eyes gleamed. "Who is Boma Ali?"

Verreker smiled grimly. He knew that Savaran would not betray even enemies, mainly because it was not necessary; he dealt with them rather fatally himself.

"I wish I knew who and what Boma Ali is," the policeman said. "He is one of our least wholesome mysteries. He's been sneaking about Africa in a way we feel unhealthy. He has a lot of money but we don't know where it comes from. He spends it freely, but we're not yet certain how."

He paused, his steady eyes on the fierce aquiline face. Savaran took another cigarette and said genially:

"But I take it that even policemen are not entirely without information."

"After Boma Ali had spent a month among the Shenzi, white men on lonely *safari* began to go missing with strange regularity, perhaps from lions, perhaps—*not*," Verreker said. "Boma Ali stayed with the Chembu, and the Leopard Men—inactive for years—began to meet and kill again. He went among the Harami Arabs and the French began at once to pick up evidence of gun running. He visited the Mai-Malunga, a docile and contented tribe, and now the Belgians are having trouble with the young bucks while their jails are filling with *hashish* addicts."

"Dope!" the lean face was fierce. "That sort of filth."

"There's no evidence, but Boma Ali's trail seems slimed with that sort of filth," the Englishman said. "And it's a queer trail. You'll have noted already that it stretches from Jannah Gaban in the Arab Hills westward to the Atlantic. Now it seems to be working east. Already there is trouble among the Kabare and the Nlazi and it looks as if the Twamba were next in line."

"A dangerous people, the Twamba," frowned Savaran. "A fighting race, but vile-minded and hostile to whites."

"Still, they might be won."

"Only by pandering to their abominations," Savaran said in so harsh a voice that Verreker wondered if some such suggestion from Boma Ali had been the reason for his flight through the window.

"Abominations seem to be Boma Ali's strong suite," he said. "And if he gains the Twamba it'll be easy to work right through to the Indian Ocean. See the significance?"

(*please turn to next page*)

Continuing POWER *of the* EYES

"A belt of revolt across the centre of Africa, cutting it in half and commanding both halves," the lean man nodded.

"It looks like a plan," said Verreker.

"And a brain," mused Savaran. "I, too, have dreamed of a Central African Empire on those lines."

"But not born in filth and the murder of whites," said Verreker softly.

"Naturally not, I am Savaran." The keen face frowned. "Yes, a clever plan, perhaps; yet whence does this garbage rooting hog get his power?"

"You think he has a power beyond money and dope?"

"Definitely. The Harami Arabs would have cut his throat and the Mai-Malunga would have handed him to the police if he hadn't had some means of mastering them."

"But what? . . . Though you'll notice that all these tribes are Mohammedan—at least in name."

"I've noticed more," said Savaran, abruptly alert. "The whole business centres on Jannah Gaban."

"I've seen that, too," Verreker agreed. "Yet what bearing can a little hill Sultanate like that have on the matter? It's pure Arab, yes, but so small, feeble and remote."

"It was founded by the Caliph Sabr Badaun, a friend and favourite of Mahomet himself," Savaran said. "The Sultans who rule there have descended in a direct line from Sabr Badaun. It is therefore a Holy Place and has thus great power over Islam in Africa. In fact, it has been the cause of many religious revivals and Holy Wars in the past."

"You mean it's a sort of little local Mecca because of this direct connection with the Prophet?" Verreker frowned.

"More than that. . . . I'm remembering now," Savaran said. "There *is* something of power there. Something that can excite the fanaticism of Africa into red war. . . . Let me think?"

"Sound enough—only what is this mysterious power?"

"I'm trying to remember. . . . Ah! . . . Have you ever heard of 'The Eye of The Prophet'?"

"I've heard Arabs swear 'By The Eye,' is that it?"

"I don't know. Even Savaran can't plumb all secrets. But if the Sultans of Jannah Gaban have that power, it explains everything. Boma Ali is using it. . . ."

"One moment, there's something that may upset that. There isn't a Sultan now. The present ruler is a woman."

"A woman!" Savaran sat back, his brilliant eyes agleam.

"A young girl, in fact," Verreker said. "The Gerada, that is the Princess Zaidie. She succeeded her father, the Sultan Iskandar, three years ago. Why are you laughing, Savaran?"

"Because the power behind Boma Ali is plain," the other said. "A man would know that dog for the scoundrel he is at once, but he has the tongue of honey and roses that can put a maid under a spell . . . especially if she be young and trusting. Believe me, who know women as well as war, there is the root of the matter. Boma Ali has talked or tricked this Gerada Zaidie into putting the power of Jannah Gaban at his service . . . and with that power plus his cunning and his money he can do as he wills with Islam in Africa."

Verreker thought deeply, said gravely: "I'm sure you're right, Savaran. And I feel that for some black reason of his own he's using that power to stir up a war that will drench Africa in blood. . . . A war that must be stopped—at any cost. . . . And yet, how? We're in the dark. He's so sly we don't know what he's up to. We've nobody with the brains and the guts to go among the natives and find out things. . . . It's almost certain death anyhow. . . . And there's this woman behind it . . . she'll need masterly handling." He looked speculatively at the eagle face.

"Everything does seem to point to me being the one white hope?" Savaran grinned.

Verreker stood up, faced his man squarely, said frankly:

"We won't fence, Savaran. The thing is too big. If this swine has his way, slaughter, such as man has never known, will break loose and barbarity of the foulest kind will regain control of Africa. It's an evil outlook, Savaran, and—and I'm ready to risk anything to prevent it."

"You mean, you'll let me escape to deal with Boma Ali and this woman Zaidie, even though you may be broken for it?" said the lean adventurer softly. "You're a big man, Verreker."

"I'm a white man," said Verreker. "And so are you."

"And, you'll make terms with a—jail bird?"

They measured each other and Verreker did not make a mistake.

"You and I," he said quietly, "don't make terms. We trust each other."

Savaran "escaped" in due course from his escort and as a draggled Arab vendor of charms he found the Harami Arabs cheerfully oiling new German rifles and gloating over the fact that they would soon be using them for the extermination of the Franji. That was certain. Had not the Prophet himself sent a new and wonderful *mullah* from Jannah Gaban with "The Eye" and "The Voice" and promises of an early slaughter and certain victory?

It was the same with the Shenzi. The marvellous new *mullah* with his "Eye" and "Voice" had so convinced this degraded tribe of a triumphant Holy War that they had lost all fear of *bwana* law. They had degenerated to things even worse than the stealthy murder Verreker had mentioned and, in one ghastly jungle interlude Savaran had seen men dancing like demons in cannibal frenzy round huge cooking fires, had heard women scream as they were dragged forward and clubbed.

It was the same story all along Boma Ali's trail. Always the ugliest native passions had been deliberately stirred up. Not only were the Mai Malunga working themselves into blood frenzy with *hashish* Boma Ali had undoubtedly supplied, but he saw young warriors of the equally mild Nlazi knobkerrie an elder to death merely for arguing against the Holy War "The Eye and Voice" was proclaiming.

Always it was "The Eye and The Voice"; always it was this mysterious power from Jannah Gaban that had mastered the natives and bent them to Boma Ali's will. And though a constant hearing of such catchwords as "freedom," "white tyrants," "exploiters of downtrodden races," began to tell Savaran what Boma Ali really was, never, even by a hint, could he get a clue to this strange "Eye and Voice." It was too holy, too secret—too dangerous. The natives feared it too much to talk about it.

Or, rather, he had no hint until that night when, as a semi-prisoner in a hut of the black Twamba, he heard his hosts discussing whether it would or would not be expedient to cut his throat then and there. Most were cheerfully in favour of it, until a headman said: "We will ask the *mullah* of "The Eye and Voice" at the palaver to-night. It may attract too much attention for us to enjoy the death of a stranger just now."

Savaran feigned sleep until all his guards save one had gone to the palaver—then he dealt with that guard. He should have made the most of his chance to escape, for the Twamba are murderers no man may take lightly. He followed the stragglers to the palaver instead. Being Savaran, risk counted little beside the chance of seeing Boma Ali at work and solving the mystery of "The Eye and The Voice."

The palaver place was a clearing in the jungle surrounded by great trees. Savaran used one of these as his grandstand. Circumstances prevented his selecting quite the tree he wanted, but the one he climbed gave a good view of the massed Twamba and its foliage afforded excellent cover.

He saw at once that there was something strange about this gathering. There was too much darkness. There were none of the great fires the savage loves, only a few torches held by men round the fringes of the crowd. And the faintly gleaming mass of black bodies were strangely quiet, as though fear sat with them. That fear became a shudder of real terror as a handful of torches moved through their midst and Boma Ali came.

Boma Ali wore rather voluminous Arab robes and the green turban of a Mecca pilgrim, but Savaran felt that the Mongol slant of the eyes in that fat, high cheeked, evil face spoke more of Asiatic Russia than Arabia.

The man crossed the whole clearing and, to Savaran's annoyance, disappeared from view under the very tree in which he hid.

Savaran craned his neck all ways to get a view, but the foliage was too thick. And just as he began to climb lower a voice shouted a com-

"He found himself blinking at a clumsy jewel that marred the wonder of her skin."

mand. . . . A silence as deathly as the grave came with a darkness as deathly.

Abruptly every torch had been beaten out and the whole glade was plunged into the impenetrable blackness of the jungle. Savaran could see not a thing, and for a minute of terrible stillness heard nothing. Then there came a vast concerted gasp of fear beneath him and a hundred terrified voices crying :

"The Eye ! The Eye ! Allah defend us—The Eye !"

The mystery of "The Eye" was being solved beneath him. The Twamba were beholding the terrifying "something" that mastered all Islam—and Savaran could see nothing. It was infuriating. He began to climb lower again, and again was stopped—"The Voice" spoke !

A voice boomed out, tremendous and terrific. It filled the whole darkness, the whole world, with such enormous and measured immensity that even Savaran felt a thrill of the uncanny pass through him. . . . It was a Voice as huge and relentless as a god's. . . . It was the Voice, it was soon plain, of that servant of God, Mahomet ! And it was giving a message, a promise of war and triumph to all true sons of Islam who obeyed the power of "The Eye."

It boomed on, awful and awe-inspiring. It preached a Holy War, but it did so by calling to all that was evil and murderous in the hearts of the listeners. It promised a saturnalia of blood, freedom and wealth when the white tyrants were exterminated, the exploiters wiped out. . . .

By that time Savaran was smiling fiercely; he had solved, anyhow, the mystery of "The Voice." Its hugeness might be the hugeness of a god, but it spoke with the accent of Boma Ali, who was anything but a god. Even its terrible immensity was easy of understanding. Boma Ali's voluminous robes and the darkness hid a microphone, amplifier, batteries, and whatever else was necessary to turn a voice into this mighty loud-speaker booming.

Illustrated by A. C. Michael

Savaran had yet to solve the mystery of "The Eye," but learnt much about Boma Ali and his plans. There was, definitely, to be a Holy War—and soon. The whole central African belt from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean was to rise at a signal from Jannah Gaban the Holy and exterminate all whites. The signal was to be the apparently miraculous coming of "The Eye" to each tribe, to make it invulnerable and to lead it to slaughter in person, so to speak. . . . But of these wonders more would be told at a great meeting of chieftains and leaders in The Forest of The Dead on the Twamba borders in three weeks time.

Savaran was held in his tree until dawn, for, at the end of Boma Ali's speech, great fires were lit and the Twamba relieved their over-excited savagery by a blood-rite orgy that made even his cold courage sick. But with the last of the black brutes gone he was down and heading for Jannah Gaban.

He had little time. He must reach that land of hell, solve the mystery, and shatter the power of "The Eye," as well as deal with this she-fiend, the Gerada Zaidie, who was hatching this devil's plot, at once. He travelled fast as only Savaran could.

In a week he was standing bewildered in a land that was a garden, in which a laughing girl sat singing a love song.

"Jannah Gaban" certainly means "The Little Garden," but Arab names are frequently sardonic and he had expected a land as harsh as the valleys of Hades. Instead here was an Arcadia of green slopes, little sleek villages, and gardens—many gardens—inhabited by a kindly people who smiled and greeted him in the name of Allah the Compassionate as he passed.

And then as he stood before what seemed an enchanted town of tree embowered houses, graceful minarets, and more jewel flowered gardens, he got the greatest shock of all.

"That is the Princess's palace," an old road mender said, and he pointed to a building so beautiful and ethereal that it seemed but an extravagant blossom of the lovely garden in which it stood.

"And the Gerada Zaidie," asked Savaran, "is she there now ?"

" That is the Gerada Zaidie," said the old man, and Savaran saw a girl as slim and as sparkling as a flower sitting and singing on a lawn with only two sewing women in attendance.

Savaran stood astounded but his eyes brightened. The Jannah Gaban women do not wear the veil and the Gerada Zaidie was more than beautiful.

" How does one have audience with her, O Father of Wisdom?" he asked.

"Audience ? " the man was puzzled. "Speak with her, you mean? Go talk with her now. Fear not, she is our mother and our sister, and always kind, as was her father, blessed be his memory."

Savaran did not talk with her—then. He strode straight to the nearest *hammam* and, after a bath, spent some of the money Verreker had provided on clothes of such glory that princes might have been shy of them. Being Savaran, they suited him, and, striding as raking and magnificent as a Caliph of "The Arabian Nights," he went at sunset to her palace.

She put down her lute to smile up at him and he saw with certainty that this—this she-fiend was even more beautiful than at a distance, and young and high spirited and gentle.

"I am glad you have come to see me, O strange eagle," she said, "all Jannah Gaban already wonders who and what you are."

"And what do they say I am?" he asked, on guard even though his eyes paid tribute to her beauty.

"Some the Zeb Arab you seem, others a Sheik from El Yemen."

"And you, O Wisdom in Beauty?"

"I think, maybe, you're English," she laughed, and he blinked, for she said it in English. "I hope you are."

"If you hope—I am," he flashed back. "Even if it be danger."

"Danger !" she smiled, amazed. "How danger?"

"Don't you exterminate Infidels in this stronghold of Islam?" he asked.

"Where," she laughed, "do you get such old-fashioned ideas?"

Sitting on the rich *diwan* beside her, he began to wonder himself. He had spent two hours walking the town before visiting her and found it like the rest of her land, gentle and peaceful. There was no hint even of a Holy War. And though the people were obviously highly religious it was in a quiet, indulgent way and without any suggestion of fanaticism. And then, as he asked himself how this girl and this place could be behind Boma Ali and his foul plotting, she said :

"I rather like Infidels ! I was sent several years ago to Constantinople to live and learn under the shadow of The Protector of the Faithful. My father did not know that the old Sultans had gone and that the Young Turks were in power, so I learnt about new ideas instead and met many English and other Europeans. I prefer them even to some True Believers, but don't tell Sidi Hafiz the Wakil of the mosque here; he would be shocked."

"Ah—he is a fanatic?"

"Sidi Hafiz ! That mild old lamb !" she laughed. "He wouldn't say a harsh word even of a Benin idolator. But as Chief Priest of a Holy Place like this he naturally feels that Islam is the only Faith that matters and would like to coax the whole world into accepting the Prophet—on whom be Peace."

Coax ! He stared bewildered. Was she really as lovely-minded as she seemed or was this Eastern guile? He said boldly :

"Oh—and I came here thinking to find a Holy War."

"War !" Real disgust was in her clear eyes. "Here? How hateful. We have nothing to do with wars here and never will while I rule. I heard too much of their horrors in Constantinople."

She was genuine. She really loathed war—and yet Boma Ali with his money and filth was organising one in her name.

"But I heard—it was spoken among the tribes, that a new awakening of Islam was being preached from here," he pressed.

"You mean Boma Ali's work," she said calmly, astoundingly. "But that is not war !" She smiled at his bewilderment. "Boma Ali is a holy man from Mecca who is horrified at the way Mohammedanism has degenerated into slackness and even paganism in Africa. He has been inspired to preach a great revival, a great purification, and naturally he sought our support."

"Why—naturally?" he asked.

"We have that which has power among the Faithful," she said.

"'The Eye and The Voice'?" he asked, sharply alert.

"'The Voice' !" she was puzzled. "I don't know what you mean by 'The Voice.' . . . But 'The Eye'—that has been revered as a power since the Prophet himself gave it to Sabr Badaun, my ancestor."

"What," he asked weightily, "is 'The Eye'?"

"An amulet, a talisman," she said, troubled by his gravity. "Why do you ask so—anxiously?"

"There is high cause for anxiety, O Princess," he told her. "Will you tell me wherein is the power of 'The Eye'?"

"It should not be told or shown to Unbelievers," she said, but hesitatingly, for his manner infected her.

"I have a grave reason, O Light of Gentleness."

She looked at him steadily for a moment, then called servants into the chamber. At her orders they began putting out the lights. As they did so she stood in front of him and, with the gestures of a queen, bared her bosom.

On the honey gold of her skin between the young curves of her breasts lay an oblong jewel. It was made of some coarse greyish metal and set oddly with precious stones. The servants murmured in awe at the sight of it, but Savaran saw no reason for awe, for it was a clumsy jewel without beauty.

She read his mind, smiled, stepped back, and gave another order. At once the last lights in the

(*please turn to next page*)

Continuing POWER *of the* EYES

room were quenched and utter darkness came—just such a darkness as had descended on the Twamba glade when the torches were extinguished. . . And he saw what the Twamba had seen, for he cried out, startled: "The Eye!"

A great eye glowed at him out of the darkness. A great eye of greenish-white fire. An eye so real, so uncanny, so suggestive of watching power, that he knew how savages must be awed by it. He himself felt held in a spell, waiting for the great Voice. . . . But all that came was Zaidie's soft laugh as she heard his breath catch and her voice saying:

"You, too, feel its power as all men have. That is because the virtue of the Prophet is really in it—as he promised it would be when he gave it to Sabr Badaun."

She spoke again, the room blazed with light, and he found himself blinking merely at a clumsy jewel that marred the wonder of her skin.

"Some trick of phosphorescence in that strange metal plus a cunning arrangement of the precious stones?" he argued, examining it closely.

"Perhaps," she shrugged, covering it. "If you must have a material explanation. But there is no other talisman like it."

"You're sure of that?" he demanded.

"Absolutely. We are too careful of it even to let it be copied for devotional purposes. You see, even apart from its holiness it is a dangerous thing. It has caused more than one war, for my forefathers used its power among the tribes to stir up fanaticism. Think what an unscrupulous person might not do with it if it were duplicated."

"You admit that would be a great danger?"

"A hideous danger and a sacrilege—but it is impossible."

"And yet," said Savaran, grimly fierce, "I heard the black Twamba vow themselves to war before just such an Eye a week ago."

"Impossible!" she cried, aghast. "And horrible—what fiend could possess and make such use of such an Eye?"

"Boma Ali!" said Savaran grimly.

Zaidie the Princess could not believe it. Sidi Hafiz could not believe it. Indeed, that gentle old saint at first rejected such a libel on Boma Ali with horror. That he had duped savages with such an Eye, that he had added to it the infamy of faking the Voice of The Holy One, that he had even preached war—such things were unthinkable. Sidi Hafiz, even more than Zaidie, had been fooled by the honey tongue of Boma Ali, and he could see the man only as a Holy Sheik concerned solely with the spread and purification of Islam, a man who hated violence as much as he did himself. In fact, he had been so convinced through many spiritual talks of Boma Ali's goodness that he had loaned him a house belonging to the mosque to be used as a headquarters and a store for the many cases of literature, holy objects, and trade goods necessary to the *mullah's* missionary work.

"Then," said Savaran, genially fierce, "we can satisfy ourselves whether he has a halo or hoofs by examining that house."

A slink-eyed servant tried to keep them out, but at the sight of the Princess and Sidi Hafiz backing the fierce grin of Savaran, he turned and bolted to the back quarters. Savaran went after him. The fellow shouted and men armed with knives came to his aid. There was a brief dog-fight in which long, lean arms seemed to be mainly occupied in beating heads by couples against walls.

Then men, with and without knives, lay in attitudes of peculiar indifference all over the floor and the spider-spare adventurer had whirled out of sight. But not of hearing. There came from the back rooms a sudden snapping outburst of shooting, a scream or two, and then a concerted wail for mercy followed by Savaran's voice calling cheerily for servants and bonds to tie up jackals.

A few minutes later he appeared himself and, with white teeth flashing in his gipsy face, beckoned them to the back rooms.

"Behold Boma Ali's trade goods, O Sidi," he grinned, leading them to a stack of packing cases.

"Rifles!" gasped the priest, but Savaran was already drawing him to a second stack.

"And what would you call this," he asked, "pious literature?"

"*Hashish*! May the anger of Allah smite the purveyor of such abomination," roared the old priest. "We have indeed been duped."

They had indeed. The house yielded rich details of Boma Ali's gigantic war plot. Not only had he used the semi-magic of "The Eye" to dominate the superstitious natives, but he had found in the peaceful remoteness of Jannah Gaban the ideal clearing house for his arms-running, drugs, letters, money, and intrigue. Thus, snugly safe from white law, he had built up his plan for launching more than a million natives into a revolt of horror and slaughter against the whites.

"And this is how the arch-wart-hog would have worked it," said Savaran, setting out twenty copies of the amulet of "The Eye" on a *diwan*—and placing beside them a big pot labelled "Phosphorous Paint."

"These are but crude copies of the amulet, it is true," he went on. "But they would pass muster with savages, and with "The Eye" drawn on them with this phosphorescent paint they are as good as the genuine amulet—in the dark. Boma Ali wears one such duplicate always and is thus able to master the tribes as I saw him master the Twamba. . . . "The Voice," of course, being a little extra spell-binder of his own. These other twenty are to provide the miracle I heard him talk about. Boma Ali will send twenty of his creatures among the tribes, and these, bearing "The Eye" upon their breasts, will give the signal and lead the various tribes into war."

"O foulness of treachery! O sink of infamy!" wailed the old priest in despair. "How is such wickedness to be stopped?"

But Zaidie the Princess touched Savaran's arm and said in her soft voice: "You have proved yourself, O Eagle—and you are Savaran. You can save us from our folly."

"I believe," he said with his flashing smile, "it was the one thing Savaran was really created to do."

On a huge, square altar stone that topped a mound in a clearing of The Forest of Death, Boma Ali stood alone (as was necessary for his trickery) looking down at massed natives. His gross lips smirked in satisfaction. His task was all but done.

This was his last great meeting. Below him were gathered the chiefs and leading men of all the tribes he had been so craftily infecting with war frenzy in the past months. All that was left to do was to work them up to a final fury, give them his final instructions and send them back to their tribes keyed up to fever pitch, to await that signal of "The Eye" that was to launch them in red carnage over the length and breadth of Africa. To-morrow he was travelling to Jannah Gaban to wind up the last details of his plot, send off the men with the fake amulets that were to be the signal of revolt, and take steps to secure his own safety. His planning was perfect. In thirteen days Africa would be running with blood. It was his moment of supreme triumph.

He took one last leering glance round to make sure that he could not be overlooked, noted how intent, awed, and vicious the waiting mass was, and raised his hand. The time had come. "The Voice of the Eye" was to order war!

As his hand went up every torch in the clearing was dashed out. Black and terrible darkness took the jungle and a silence as black and frightful. He heard the stir and gasp of the fearful savages before him. It was music to his ears. He lifted forward to his shoulder the microphone that was hidden in the hood of his burnous and complacently began to open his *kraftan* to expose "The Eye" to the throng. . . .

And even as he did so fingers of steel sank into his fat neck and a fiercely mocking voice whispered: "Boma Ali, my sweet, your hour has come, but not the hour you looked for!"

"Savaran!" The lips could form, but scarcely utter, the scream, and Boma Ali in a sudden sweat of terror began to kick. But he was in the hands of a master. A lean leg locked his legs, the iron hands squeezed so sharply that he choked, shifted in a flash, and struck a blow like a hammer. Boma Ali sagged like an empty sack and as he slid to the ground his failing senses caught a whisper:

"Zaidie, O lioness of courage, *now*! . . . Stand on the altar . . . uncover 'The Eye'!"

Vaguely the swooning Boma Ali heard the rustle of silken garments, sensed a slim, swaying figure. Then a greenish gleam broke the darkness above him and he knew from the groan of superstitious fright that went up from the throng that it was looking upon "The Eye"—but the true Eye this time on the breast of the Gerada Zaidie, the true possessor of its power.

As complete insensibility swamped Boma Ali, he felt the agile fingers of Savaran lifting the microphone, felt the eagle head bent close to his, heard the giant, god-like voice beginning to boom . . . but it was Savaran's voice using the microphone to undo his work.

But it wasn't easy to undo, even for Savaran. Boma Ali had stirred these savage minds up to the breaking point of frenzy. When the Voice of "The Eye" astounded them by forbidding the war, when it ordered them to disperse in peace to their tribes and live in obedience to white law, their over-excited and primitive instincts rebelled—even against "The Eye."

There were growls and snarls as though from beasts who had had blood-meat snatched from them when they were ravening with hunger. There were yells of protest, cries of treachery. A great bull voice roared: "A devil has taken possession of 'The Eye!' A devil is betraying us!"

Savaran, being Savaran, had anticipated this. With his lips close to the microphone he let out a roar of command so terrible that it silenced even the massed clamour.

"O impious and heedless people, beware!" he shouted. "Do you dare defy 'The Eye and The Voice'? . . . Then I call upon the Angels of Heaven to punish you. . . . Look up, O vile dogs, the legions of Allah are about you."

The savages looked up, and a chorus of howls and yelps broke out. High up among the trees that fringed the glade they saw a multitude of replicas of "The Eye" staring down at them . . . well, it looked a multitude! Savaran had taken a leaf out of Boma Ali's book. He had not only hung the twenty faked amulets on the breasts of certain hand-picked citizens of Jannah Gaban, but with the phosphorous paint he had drawn "The Eye" on the chests of thirty others, all of whom were now perched in the branches of the trees.

Certain that they were menaced by a heavenly horde, the savages fell into confusion. Some screamed for mercy! Most of them yapped with fear, yet all the same there was an agnostic group who still craved for slaughter enough to talk of "devils."

The bull voice yelled again: "Kill the demon who has gained possession of 'The Eye.' . . . Spears! Spears!"

As the voice spoke Savaran made a wild grab at Zaidie's ankles, caught her in his arms as she fell, and dropped with her under the shelter of the great altar stone. Even as he touched ground that altar sparked and rang as the steel blades of a flight of spears hit the stone. Yet even as he rolled he had loosed his voice in a great shout, and the word he shouted was "Bombs!" And instantly from the trees the fifty Jannah Gaban "angels" tossed the bombs they had obtained from Boma Ali's own store into the milling mass of blacks beneath them.

"And that," the eagle-faced adventurer grinned at Verreker two weeks later, "was the end of all war, Holy or otherwise. The tribes really thought that the Prophet had sent his angels with lightning and thunder to smite them for impiety. The whole mob broke and ran like one man after the explosion."

"And spread the news of the Wrath of Allah on war-makers throughout Africa," smiled Verreker. "Yes, you smashed Boma Ali's war in the completest possible way—at one stroke. I don't think there will be any more trouble for generations. And—what happened to Boma Ali?"

"He died of the very spears he had hoped to launch against white civilisation," said Savaran grimly. "I thought it more fitting to leave him behind on the altar stone when we dropped to cover. It saved so much trouble. When I looked at him next he was a veritable pin cushion of spears."

"And that ends Boma Ali," nodded Verreker. "And now, what about you, Savaran? You're free of all British Colonies after this, of course, but—you're too good stuff to be wandering loose in Africa as you have been. Can't we find work for you? The Governorship of a Province, say. . . ."

"What is a province," said Savaran with his flashing smile, "to a man with a taste for kingdoms?"

"A kingdom. . . . I don't know that I can find you a kingdom," Verreker smiled, and then stopped. He saw the way the Gerada Zaidie looked at Savaran, the way her hand stole out to his, saw Savaran's genially fierce but triumphant smile.

He knew that he had no need to find the lean adventurer a kingdom. Savaran, being Savaran, had found one for himself.

BULLS and BEARS of CAPEL COURT

by

W. J. PASSINGHAM

The bleak façade of finance

Jobbers await their brokers

This animated street trading

DESPITE the wide publicity given to the rise and fall of stocks and shares few people understand the workings of that mysterious organisation known as the London Stock Exchange. To the average person the Stock Exchange is a closed building, and except for distinguished people who from time to time are conducted over the premises by a Trustee, none other than members or their authorised clerks is allowed to enter beyond the doors of this famous place in Capel Court nestling in the shadow of the Bank of England.

Those who have ventured to "gate-crash" the London Stock Exchange have afterwards regretted their temerity. One daring adventurer in particular seems to have had the time of his life there. According to his story, no sooner had he entered the place than a dark-complexioned man with a prominent nose shouted, "Fourteen Hundred!" The cry was taken up on all sides. He was pushed to and fro like a shuttlecock between two parties of excited members, the crown of his brand new bowler hat was punched clean out, and he was thrown like a bird in flight through the doorway into the street.

As he sat dazedly on the steps in Capel Court, he heard a voice from the doorway saying "Hurry up with that hammer, Mo!" Although by nature an inquisitive man, he did not wait.

Immediately an unauthorised person is discovered inside the London Stock Exchange the cry of "Fourteen Hundred!" is raised, and is said to have originated at a time when there were exactly 1,399 members. Thus, through its very exclusiveness, has the Stock Exchange come to be something of a mystery to people outside financial circles. Yet the London Stock Exchange is, in the extent of its business and its ramifications throughout almost every other country, the greatest and most powerful organisation of its kind in the world.

Stockbroking did not arise in anything like the form in which it is known to-day, however, until the reign of William III, and at that time dealing in stocks and shares was not considered to be the occupation of a gentleman. Dr. Johnson reflects the opinion of his time in his famous dictionary, where he defines a stock-jobber as "a low wretch who gets money by buying and selling shares in the funds." In spite of this general opinion the stock-jobbers gradually established themselves as being necessary to the finance of the realm through their conduct and integrity.

Like many other important marketing organisations in London the market for stocks and shares had its beginning in a coffee house. Jonathan's Coffee House was the haunt of stock-jobbers, and in 1773 they decided that in future this establishment should be known as "The Stock Exchange." A fee of sixpence a day was charged for entrance, and these arrangements stood for twenty-eight years until—in 1801—the present building was opened in Capel Court.

The capital raised was £20,000 in 400 shares of £50 each, and all first members of the new Stock Exchange were balloted for at an annual subscription of ten guineas each. Since the early days, of course, fees have altered considerably from time to time. A year after it was opened for business the original committee of nine were appointed Trustees and Managers with authority to deal with all matters concerning the building and its arrangement. It was also provided that a General Purposes Committee of thirty members, to be elected annually, should control the business of the exchange. Thus every year the General Purposes Committee must resign, and seek re-election by the members. A general meeting and ballot for this purpose takes place on March 20th of each year.

Stockbrokers during the early days at Capel Court went to great lengths to obtain early information of events happening abroad likely to affect the market. It is on record that one financier paid £6,000 a year to the Duke of Marlborough for the privilege of accompanying his army, so that any change in the European situation could be utilised in operations on the stock market. Before the introduction of the telegraph and telephone, communication with the Continent was a long and uncertain business.

Flying began a hundred years ago for the Stock Exchange, when in 1835 the first "Pigeon Express" was inaugurated by operators on the London market to obtain the latest information from abroad. The cost of maintaining a service of carrier pigeons was as much as from £500 to £700 a year, and the procedure is described by a writer of the time as follows :—

"The training of the birds took a considerable time before they could be relied on; and the relays and organisation required to perfect the scheme not only involved a vast expenditure of time, but also of money. In the first place, to make the communication of use on both sides of the Channel, it was necessary to get two distinct establishments for the flight of pigeons—one in England and another in France.

"It was then essential that persons in whom reliance could be placed should be stationed in the two capitals, to be in readiness to receive or despatch the birds destined to bring or carry intelligence and make it available for the parties interested. Hence it became evident that one speculator, without he was a very wealthy man, would not hope to support a pigeon express. The consequence was that, the project being mooted, two or three of the speculators, including brokers of the House, themselves joined and worked it for their own benefit.

"Between 1837 and 1840 a vast sum was netted by the 'pigeon men' as the speculators supposed to have possession of such intelligence were termed; and their appearance in the market was always indicative of a rise or fall, according to the tendency of their operations. Having the first chance of buying or selling, they of course had the market to themselves for a while on their own hands; but as time progressed, it was found the papers with their 'second editions' would communicate the advices and thus the general brokers refused to do business until the papers reached the City.

"The pigeons bringing the advices occasionally got shot in their passage, but as a flock of some eight or a dozen were started at a time, miscarriage was not of frequent occurrence. At the time of the death of Mr. Rothschild, for example, a pigeon was caught at Brighton, having been disabled by a gun-shot wound. Beneath the shoulder feathers of the left wing was discovered a small note with the words, 'Il est mort', followed by a number of hieroglyphics.

"Each pigeon establishment had a method of communication entirely its own, and the conductors, if they fancied the key to it was in another person's power, immediately varied it. A case of this description occurred in the early days of pigeon expresses. The parties interested in the scheme fancied that, however soon they received intelligence, there were others in the market who were quite equal with them.

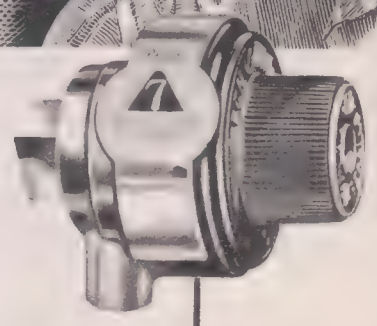
"In order to arrive at the real position of affairs the chief proprietor consented, at the advice of a friend, to pay £10 for the early perusal of a supposed rival's pigeon express. The express came to hand—he read it, and was not a little surprised to find that he was in reality paying for the perusal of his own news!

"The truth soon came out—somebody had bribed the keeper of his pigeons, thus not only making a profit by the sale of his intelligence but also on the speculations they in consequence conducted. The defect was soon remedied by changing the style of the characters employed, and all went right as before."

Many strange tricks were perpetrated by dealers during the depression of the market caused by Napoleon's activities, when all England was in a state of anxiety. One speculator engaged the services of an actor, who dressed himself in the uniform of a staff officer and arrived about midnight at the Ship Hotel, Dover. Such a distinctive uniform, of course, at once attracted attention among the many people waiting there for news from the Continent. The "staff officer," in full view of a staring audience, sat down and wrote a letter to the effect that Napoleon had been defeated and slain by the Allies in Belgium. A messenger was brought to him, and took away the letter, which was addressed to the Admiral of the Port.

(*continued on page* 13)

FAMILY COOKS SAY...



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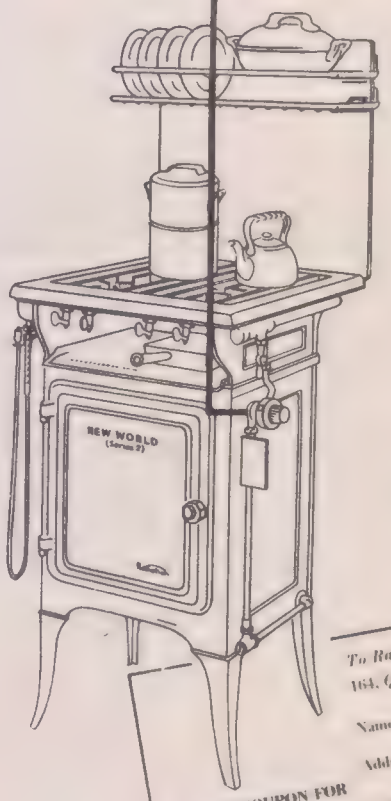

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As the conspirators expected, that letter was read by several people before it reached the Admiral's hands. Early on the following morning the news reached London, and securities rose accordingly. Before midday the news was seriously doubted because it lacked official confirmation, but by that time the speculators had unloaded their stock on a sharply-rising market.

With such a state of affairs it would be impossible for the Stock Exchange to function as itdoes to-day. In these days of rapid communication by telegraph and telephone, for example, a chance word spoken by a potentate in Asia is sufficient in some cases to affect the London market within an hour of its being uttered.

To the average person passing through Throgmorton Street about mid-day there is no more animated scene in all London than the silk-hatted gathering of buyers and sellers in the roadway. Here it is that jobbers await their brokers, calm and unflurried, and ready to deal. A study of these people will reveal that in most cases the separate groups on the pavement and in the roadway are made up of dealers in the same commodity. By watching the behaviour of these different groups, it is possible to identify the class of investment in which the members operate.

The "Consols" group remains aloof, dignified, and this attitude seems peculiar to all those who deal in "Gilt-edged," or "Government" securities. This select, austere little crowd forms a striking contrast to the loud-voiced, demonstrative dealers in "Industrials," "Rubber," or "Kaffir" shares. Nevertheless, it is these "lesser breeds" of the financial world who have the greatest influence on the money market, bringing Stock Exchange operations into the limelight.

Before dealing with the functions of the stock-jobber and stockbroker, it is necessary to define the function of the Stock Exchange itself. Briefly, the Stock Exchange is the market that deals in shares in joint stock companies, and bonds and debentures which are the documents representing debts. These latter may be the debts of companies, debts of other institutions performing economic functions—such as water-boards or port authorities —or they may be debts of governments, or local governments.

Members of the Stock Exchange may be divided into two distinct classes—the stock-jobbers and the stockbrokers. A stockbroker is an agent who represents either the seller or the buyer of stocks and shares; the stock-jobber is simply a dealer in securities with whom the stockbroker deals when buying or selling on behalf of his clients. With the exception of dealings in gilt-edged securities, and a few other insignificant cases, operations on the Stock Exchange are governed by a definite time limit for the settlement of all bargains, and this period is called the "account."

When financial operations are conducted on a scale where they affect the prosperity and well-being of the average citizen, the man-in-the-street usually finds himself both interested and mystified by Stock Exchange procedure. He hears of "Bull" and "Bear" operations, of people who acquire wealth suddenly by "Stagging" the market, and, although he is not quite sure of what is actually happening, he is loud in his denunciation of the financiers who by their dark influence seem able to sway the balance of national prosperity.

The Bull, the Bear, and the Stag merely represent the three classes of speculator on the Stock Exchange. To show the working tactics of these three, we will follow the adventures of a fictitious Mr. Smith who decides on a "Bull" operation in, say, drapery shares. Now in the first place Mr. Smith must foresee a *rise* in drapery shares during the next fortnight—the period of the "account," remember—before he decides on a "Bull" operation.

Drapery shares may at this time be showing a slight rise in price, or they may even be still falling.

In the latter case Mr. Smith, a "downy" bird after his own kind and with utmost confidence in his own prophetic instinct—or the value of "inside" information—waits until he feels that drapery shares have about reached rock-bottom. Then he steps in and starts to buy, and keeps on buying until his judgment tells him that these shares are reaching their maximum quotation—and then he sells out at a profit. So far, so good.

At this stage in the fortunes of drapery shares, however, there is another gentleman—a certain Mr. Jones, if you like—who has been watching this market for a long time, and viewing it from a very different angle to that of our "Bull" friend Mr. Smith.

Mr. Jones, another "downy" bird, has formed the opinion that drapery shares will fall fast during the next fortnight. The kind of operation he contemplates stamps him as a "Bear," and his subsequent procedure is both curious and clever. At the moment he owns not a single share in the drapery market, but in spite of this he does not hesitate to approach likely buyers and offer to sell drapery shares.

Within a few days, or a few hours as the case may be, Mr. Jones finds himself committed to deliver several large blocks of shares he does not possess. Does he worry? Just watch Mr. Jones. The day of delivery is not until the "account", and there are several days to go before the goods are handed over. Meanwhile drapery shares are falling, falling. . . . What a day! Mr. Jones waits for the lowest quotation—and then he steps in and buys enough shares to cover the amount he has sold. The difference in the prices at which he sold and bought, of course, represents his profit. Things are still good.

Now meet Mr. Brown, whose manner of interfering in financial affairs makes him a "Stag". His is a good game too—sometimes. Mr. Brown is not concerned with the rise and fall of drapery shares, the fortunes of "Bulls" and "Bears". For him the well-being of the world depends on "inside" information on the subject of private firms about to become companies. Strictly speaking, the Stock Exchange is not concerned with the formation of new companies, or of selling the first securities in such companies to the investing public. But after the first issue of these securities quotations are posted on the Stock Exchange, and this is where Mr. Brown comes in.

When Mr. Brown does come in he is usually met with a volley of abuse from exasperated company promoters. What has he done? Well, from information received, good judgment or good luck—have it which way you like—Mr. Brown learned that the firm of "So and So" was a sound and prosperous one, and was about to blossom forth as a company. Thus he applied for an allotment of new shares in this concern, because he believed that the price would rise quickly as soon as they were circulated on the market.

No sooner was there a quotation for these shares, and the price began to rise, than Mr. Brown unloaded his holdings to obtain a quick profit. But "inside" information and good judgment were not confined to Mr. Brown. Several "Stag" operators quickly unloaded their shares in the same company on to the market, and this caused a sharp depression in prices—as well as bad language among the company promotors. Happy days on the Stock Exchange!

Those who know the rest about "well laid schemes of mice and men", however, realise that Messrs. Smith, Jones and Brown must often fall into the cart. But unlike some operators on Epsom Downs, those at Capel Court are not good runners. They must stay and face the music. Thus for a "Bull" who finds his shares fail to rise, and the "Bear" who finds that the expected fall in prices does not take place, there is a recognised procedure called "carrying over."

As the name implies, "carrying over" is the postponement of the actual completion of a deal. Those operators whose deals have gone wrong are allowed, subject to certain recognised charges, to carry over their bargains into the next "account". In the case of a "Bull" the process is called a "contango:" in the "Bear's" case the charge for "carrying over" is known as "backwardation."

In addition to the stockbrokers and stock-jobbers, clerks to members of the Stock Exchange are also admitted under certain terms and conditions. The clerks are graded in three classes, and termed Settling-Room Clerks, Unauthorised Clerks, and Authorised Clerks.

Settling-Room Clerks may be identified by a red badge fixed in the lapel of their coats, and their duties are confined to checking bargains and other details of the Settling Room. Unauthorised Clerks are permitted to enter the House for the purpose of carrying messages, obtaining prices and any other requirements for their employers, and are distinguished by a blue badge. The Authorised Clerk is at liberty to exercise virtually all the privileges of a member.

Membership of the Stock Exchange is an expensive privilege for those who have not first served as clerks, in either an authorised or unauthorised capacity. An outsider who wishes to become a member must buy this privilege from one about to retire from the Stock Exchange. He must also find three members each of whom is willing to stand as sureties in the sum of £500 if the applicant fails within four years of his election. The candidate must then be ready to buy three shares in the Stock Exchange (worth more than £200 each), pay an entrance fee of 600 guineas, and an annual subscription of 100 guineas.

A candidate who has served four years as a clerk in the House, however, can be admitted as a member with two sureties of £300 each, an entrance fee of 300 guineas, and only half the full annual subscription. But there is a very long list of clerks waiting to become members.

Stock-brokers of a hundred years ago

THOSE SISTERS SCOBIE

THAT sharp September morning, while Finlay stood warming his boots at the fire before stepping inside them, Janet entered the room with a slip of paper in her hand.

"There's a call," she remarked, "for Anabel Scobie." And she held out the paper with a singular expression on her face.

He took the paper, a curious, narrow strip which somehow impressed him as having been cut carefully to pattern, and let his eye fall upon the angular, old-fashioned script :

Miss Beth Scobie requests the doctor kindly to call upon her sister Anabel, who is unwell.

"All right, Janet," he nodded. "I'll make a note of it."

She stood for a moment, watching him make the entry in his book, burning, simply, to tell him something of the Scobies. The conflict between her imposed dignity and a frightful inclination to gossip made the corners of her down-drawn lips twitch—like a cat within sight of forbidden cream. Glancing up suddenly, he caught that thirsting look fixed on him. He laughed outright.

"Don't worry, Janet," he said amiably. "I've heard about the Scobies."

She bridled.

"It's just as well. For not one thing would ye have heard about them from me." With her head in the air she turned on her heel, and in high indignation swept from the room.

The fact is that most folks in Levenford knew about the Scobies. They were sisters. Two maiden ladies, well past fifty, who occupied the little grey stone house at the end of Levenford Crescent. It was an old-fashioned house situated beyond the Green, right on the edge of the Estuary, a wind-blown little house, with a wonderful view of ships and open water and a taste of salt, so to speak, washed into its very mortar.

Captain Scobie had built the house when—a widower with two grown daughters—he retired at long last from fighting the Atlantic gales. And he had built it snug and proper within sight and sound and smell of the sea he loved so well.

He was a short, trim, genial man, Abernethy Scobie who had served his time in sail, stood his watch on the paddle-pushers that made their clanking passage to Calcutta in the 'eighties, and come finally to command the *Magnetic*, the finest twin-screw ship that ever left the Latta Yard for the southern trans-Atlantic route. That, in a sense, is ancient history, for Captain Scobie was dead these eighteen years past. But his daughters, Beth and Anabel, still lived on in the solid, spray-stung house which their father had built upon the Estuary shore.

Beth was the elder, a small, dark, dried-up woman with black, forbidding eyebrows aud hair drawn tight as wire.

Anabel was two years younger, very like her sister, except that she was taller and more angular. She had, however, a shade of colour in her cheeks, and sometimes, alas, when the wind blew sharp, in her nose as well.

They dressed alike—two regular old maids—the same style in shoes, gloves, hats, stockings of the same ply wool, and gowns always of black, with a thin white edging at the neck and cuff. And they had the same expression—that bleak and vaguely hostile look which seems somehow to become ingrained in the faces of elderly spinsters compelled by usage to live too much together. For they were always together. In fifteen years they had not once been apart. But for fifteen years they had not spoken a single word to one another. This stupendous fact seemed incredible. But it was true. And, like most incredibly stupendous facts, it had arisen in the simplest, the silliest manner possible. It had arisen over Rufus.

Rufus was a cat, a large ginger cat belonging equally to the sisters, and equally esteemed by them. Every evening they took in turn the duty of calling Rufus from the back garden, where, like a sensible cat, he habitually promenaded before stretching himself luxuriously upon the kitchen hearth to sleep.

"Rufus ! Rufus ! Here, here !" Anabel would call one night. And on the next Beth, not to be thought copying her sister, would exclaim :

"Pussy, pussy ! Here, Rufie, here !"

It went like clockwork until that fatal night of fifteen years before. Then Beth, glancing up from her knitting, or it might have been her crochet, towards the clock, inquired :

"Why haven't you called Rufus, Anabel?"

To which Anabel replied, without rancour :

"Because it isn't my turn. I called him last night."

"But, no !" Beth countered. "I called him last night."

"You did not, Beth Scobie."

"I did !"

"You did not !"

"Allow me, but I did ! I remember because he would keep hiding in the currant bushes."

"That was the night before ! I remember fine you telling me when you came in. It wasn't last night."

"I beg your pardon, but it was last night."

Then they both lost their tempers and went at it hammer and tongs. Finally Beth determinedly demanded :

"For the last time, Anabel, I ask you. Will you go and call the cat?"

"It is *not* my turn to call the cat."

Whereupon they both rose and went to bed. Neither of them called the cat.

All might have been well but for the fact that Rufus, finding himself so unexpectedly at large, took it into his stupid feline head to wander.

Next morning Rufus was lost—not only lost, but lost beyond recall. And when it was known that Rufus was irreparably gone, Beth turned to her sister like a viper that has been trampled on :

"I will never," she declared with concentrated venom, "speak to you again as long as I live until you go down upon your bended knees and beg my pardon for what you have done."

"And I," Anabel retorted passionately, "will never speak to *you* again as long as I have breath in my body, until *you* go down on *your* bended knees and beg pardon of me."

Such vows have been taken before in the course of family squabbles ! But the strange thing about this vow was that the Scobie sisters kept it.

It fell out, then, at half-past eleven on this particular day when he got word to call on Miss Anabel, that Finlay walked up the white pebbled path of the Scobie house and knocked discreetly at the Scobie door, Beth Scobie opened the door herself.

Though the sisters were comfortably off, with an income derived from a joint annuity, they prided themselves in keeping no maid.

"Please to step this way, doctor," Beth observed, showing him into the front parlour, a freezingly clean apartment with horse-hair furniture, marine paintings on the walls, some excellent Satsuma china in a case, and a heavy marble presentation clock ticking solemnly upon the mantelpiece.

In the same colourless voice she added :

"I'll see if my sister is ready for you yet." Then she left the room.

When she had gone, Finlay turned instinctively to warm himself at the fireplace. It was blank, however, of any cheerful blaze—the grate hidden behind an incised lacquer screen. But on the mantelpiece beside the clock his eyes was arrested by a neat pile of paper slips, each exactly like the slip upon which had been written the message asking him to call. Beside the little pile of papers lay a pencil.

Finlay stared at the papers and the pencil, while a dim understanding worked to the surface of his mind. Suddenly he observed two crumpled slips lying in the grate behind the screen, and, impelled by an odd curiosity, he stooped and picked them up.

On the first, written in pencil, were the words : *I don't feel well, please send for the doctor :* and on the second : *A pack of nonsense fancying you're ill.*

Finlay dropped the papers in amazement. So that, he thought, that's the way they've worked it all the time.

Just then a noise made him swing round. Beth stood before him at the door.

"My sister will see you," she declared evenly.

And he could have sworn she was crushing a slip of paper in her palm.

He went upstairs, at her direction, for she did not follow, and entered one of the two front bedrooms.

Anabel lay in the big brass bed covered by a beautifully worked bedspread. The linen of the sheets and pillows was very fine. But Anabel herself was far from being fine.

It took Finlay just five minutes to discover that she had influenza—the early symptoms—and that she was going to have it pretty bad. Her skin was dry, her temperature on the rise, her pulse bounding; and already there was a suspicious roughness creeping round the bases of her lungs.

She submitted grimly to his examination. She had none of that skittish modesty which so often besets the elderly unmarried female. And at the end she went straight to the point.

"I'm going to be ill, then, by the look of ye?"

"You've got influenza," he admitted. "There's a regular epidemic of it about. It's sharp while it lasts, but not serious."

At his evasion she laughed shortly, which brought on her cough.

"I mean," he amended, colouring, "you'll be over it in a week or ten days."

A. J. CRONIN

"Adventures of a [illegible] young Dr. [illegible]"

Then they both lost their tempers and went for it hammer and tongs. Finally Beth determinedly demanded: "For the last time, Anabel, I ask you. Will you go and call the cat?"

Illustrated by J. Dewar Mills

"Of course I will!"

"In the meantime, I'd better get you a nurse."

"You'll do no such thing, doctor."

The dour look settled back in her deep-set eyes.

"My sister will look after me. She'll make a handless nurse, no doubt, poor creature, but I maun just put up with that." Pause. "She's stubborn, ye know, doctor. Stubborn to a fault, and quarrelsome, forbye. But I've tholed it in health. And I can thole it in sickness."

There was nothing more to be said to Anabel. He folded his stethoscope, snapped his bag shut, and went downstairs. In the parlour, amongst the horse-hair furniture, the marine paintings, the Satsuma china, and the little pile of papers by the monumental clock he addressed himself to Beth.

"Your sister has influenza."

"Influenza! Is that all? Well, well. Anabel was aye one to be sorry for herself."

"Don't you understand?" he exclaimed curtly. "Your sister is definitely ill. She'll be worse before she's better. Much worse. This influenza is no joke. It's the real pulmonary type she's got. She'll want a lot of looking after."

Beth made a slight ironic gesture.

"I can look after her. And look after well. Though I've little doubt she'll make a poor, poor patient. She's stubborn, ye know, doctor. Stubborn to a fault and quarrelsome, forbye. What I've had to endure ye wouldn't credit. But since I've endured it from her when she was well, faith, I can endure it now she's ill."

There was a silence. With a shrug of his shoulders Finlay accepted the situation. He began to explain at some length what had to be done. Having made his instructions clear he took his hat and left the house.

So Beth began to nurse her sister in that same stubborn silence which had lasted fifteen years. At the beginning it was easy enough. As yet Anabel was not acutely ill, and notes flew between the sisters like swallows on the wing. Propped up on her pillows, the invalid would scrawl:

"Give me beef tea instead of gruel to-night."

And the nurse with a frigid face would countersign:

"Very well. But you must take your medicine first."

Ludicrous, of course! But ludicrous or no, the habits of fifteen years are hard to break.

Late on the second afternoon, however, something went wrong with the well-tried system. Anabel was worse; much worse; for several hours she had been lying still, looking very queer. Now darkness was falling, and, sunk back in the bed with flushed cheeks and unseeing eyes, she lapsed into a light delirium. Nonsense it was she talked, like scraps of words and phrases, but suddenly, in the midst of that rambling incoherence, she spoke — spoke to her sister. Out came the words:

"I'm that thirsty, Beth. Please give me a drink."

Beth started as though a lance had pierced her. Anabel had spoken to her—after all these years—Anabel had spoken first. Her face, her whole body quivered. She pressed her hand against her side. Then she gave a cry.

"Yes, Anabel, I'll give you a drink. Look! Here it is . . ." And she rushed forward to the bed, supported her sister's head with her arm, offered her the cup.

The sound of Beth's voice seemed to stir Anabel from her unconsciousness. She looked at her and smiled. At that Beth began to sob, harsh dry sobs that tore and racked her narrow bosom.

"I'm sorry, Anabel," she wept. "I'm dreadfully sorry. It's been all my fault. And all about nothing."

"Maybe it was my fault," Anabel whispered. "Maybe it was my turn to call him."

"No, no," Beth sobbed. "I'm thinkin' it was mine."

That night when Finlay called he found Beth waiting for him in the parlour. All her grimness had gone, and in its place there stood a real anxiety.

"Doctor," she asked straight away. "My sister's worse. You don't think—you don't think she's not going to get better?"

"I think she'll get over it," he said eventually. "With a bit of luck, you know."

"She's got to get over it," Beth cried hysterically. "Don't you understand, doctor . . . we've made it up. This afternoon she spoke to me." And without warning she burst into tears.

In spite of himself Finlay was moved, moved by those tears—so foreign to this hard nature, they were like the waters struck miraculously from barren rock. He saw as something strangely beautiful the reconciliation of the two sisters, two crabbed and arid beings who had turned a trifling quarrel into such savage animosity, and linked their lives by speechless hatred.

With sudden poetic vision he reflected: if only he could save Miss Anabel, how marvellous to see the unfolding of these warped, malignant cords, the rebirth of affection, the progression of these twin natures into a rich and generous old age.

And such was the intensity of the thought that he declared aloud:

"We've got to save her!"

But it was not easy. The days slipped in, and Anabel hovered between delirium and reason, her fever rising and falling, her pulse flickering feebly at the wrist, her strength gradually failing. The infection ravaged her. She seemed to verge upon a secondary pneumonia which would have ended everything. That, at least, was Finlay's fear. At times he almost despaired of her, her crisis was so long delayed. But she was tough, her fibre fashioned of a stern material. She lasted bravely. And she lacked for nothing.

Beth nursed her devotedly, wheedling her, coaxing her, humouring her with the utmost tenderness.

"Come away, my dear, and take your physic." "Try some more of this nice chicken tea." "This black-currant jelly should ease your cough."

At last the reward came. A full fourteen days after the first day of her illness Finlay was able to pronounce that Anabel would recover.

At the news Beth sank down beside the bed and buried her head in the pillow beside her sister.

"Thank God!" she sobbed. She was overwrought from anxiety and loss of sleep. "Thank God, you're to be spared to me. I don't know what I'd have done without you."

From that moment Anabel progressed rapidly towards recovery. Perhaps because the acute period of her illness had been prolonged her convalescence was extraordinarily swift. In ten days she was able to be up in her room, to sit by the window and watch the fascinating procession of ships as they stole up or down the Firth.

In a fortnight she was downstairs, in another week able to go out. And at the end of the month Finlay proclaimed her as good as new.

"Indeed, ye're right, doctor," she affirmed with a self-satisfied smile. "To tell you the truth, I feel better than I did before I was taken ill."

He smiled back at her as he took his departure. "I'll look in just once again before I finish with you. Say in a week or ten days. Will that suit you?"

"It'll suit me fine, doctor," she returned primly.

When he had gone she continued swaying herself gently backwards and forwards in the rocking-chair.

"He's a nice young fellow, that," she ruminated amiably. "A real nice young lad he is. Mind you, though, when all's said and done, I wouldna go so far as to say 'twas him that saved me."

She paused significantly.

"No, no! What really gave me the turn was you speakin' to me like ye did."

Another pause, vaguely triumphant.

"Ye see . . . the very idea that you had given in, Beth . . . speakin' first like that . . . bad as I was . . . it fair uplifted me."

Beth sat up on the sofa, a little flush colouring her cheek.

"What are ye talkin' about, my dear? It was you, Anabel, who spoke to me. 'Give me a drink,' says you as plain as I'm speakin' to ye now."

"No, no," Anabel gently shook her head, "I mind fine how it was. Over ye came to my bedside and knelt down. Then, with tears in your eyes, ye said: ''Twas all my fault, Anabel, dear. I've been to blame for everything.'"

"What!" threw out Beth, stiffening in every limb, glowering at her sister from beneath those black brows of hers.

"Ay," tittered Anabel. "And you even said ye'd been wrong all along. ''Twas my turn,' says you. 'It really was my turn to call the cat.'"

"It's not true!" shouted Beth.

"Eh? What's that?" exclaimed Anabel, stopping her rocking and slowly reddening.

"It's not true," Beth repeated viciously. "It was you yourself said you were mistaken. You admitted it was your turn to call the cat."

"I did nothing of the kind."

"You did so."

"I did not. It was *not* my turn to call the cat."

"It *was* your turn."

"It was *not*."

On they went. On, on—right to the bitter, inevitable end.

And so, when Finlay called at the end of the week, silence reigned once more between the Scobie sisters. Beth and Anabel were passing notes exactly as they had done for fifteen years.

He went out of the house, stupefied, pressing his head between his hands. Then—after the manner of Cameron—he invoked the high heavens above.

"My God! If one of these auld deevils takes ill again I'll see she doesn't recover . . . if I've got to poison her myself."

SHORT SHORT STORY Complete on this Page

Late Night Final

"Of course I'm going back," he said impatiently. "She's my wife and there're the children"

by

GEORGE I. JOSEPH

"*CLARION* — late night final — *Clarion*. . . ." For a moment the thunder of the traffic drowned the newsvendor's words, but the Cockney voice crescendoed in the sudden hush that so often comes in a crowded street. "*Clarion*—late night final—*Clarion*—thank yer. . . ."

A hand seized the paper hungrily. Quickly, the man turned to the back page unconscious of the jostling of the hurrying passers-by. "2.30, 3.0, 3.30 . . . 4.30 . . ." ah, there it was: "Zephyr 1, Rio Rita 2, Rumple 3 . . . the favourite, Belladonna, fell early in the race . . ." The paper fell from the shaking hand and lay in the gutter, the light breeze languidly stirring the pages. . . . The favourite, Belladonna, fell. . . ."

The thunder of the traffic seemed to take up the words and repeat them, mockingly, warningly. The man's eyes were glazed—unseeing. To-morrow, they'd find out that he'd . . . They'd send him to gaol . . . Marion—the children—oh God! He walked on, jostling the passers-by, his subconscious self acutely alive of laughter, voices, the surging thunder of the traffic. . . . A 'bus swept from around a corner, its lamps cutting huge rifts in the gathering dusk. ". . . the favourite, Belladonna fell. . . ." The man stepped from the kerb . . . a woman screamed . . . the screech of brakes. . . .

"*Clarion*—late night final, *Clarion*," the seller stooped quickly and retrieved the paper that lay in the gutter. "*Clarion* . . ." with his sleeve, he wiped away the splash of mud on the be-chinned face of the Dowager Duchess on the front page and in almost the same movement, placed the paper in an outstretched hand. "Thank yer . . . *Clarion* . . ."

Under a street light, the purchaser opened the paper eagerly. "Wanted . . . Situations Vacant . . . no . . . Personal . . . ah!" A little cry escaped him. He turned and ran headlong to the corner. A woman seized his arm.

"Michael, has she . . . ?" His eyes gave her the answer.

"Yes," the man's voice rose in triumph. "She's forgiven me, Lola. She's taking me back. 'All forgiven. Come home,' she says."

"Michael, you're going to . . ?"

"Of course I'm going back." There was impatience in his voice. "She's my wife and there're the kids. Besides—I still love her."

"But Michael . . ."

"We'll start all over again."

Fiercely, the woman clutched at his arm.

"You belong to me. You can't go back."

Roughly, he pulled his arm away from her clasp.

"You always knew it couldn't last. Good-bye, Lola."

"Michael . . . Michael . . ."

But he had gone throwing the paper from him as though a gesture of farewell.

"Michael . . . Michael . . ." with a sob, the woman stumbled after him.

The paper lay on the pavement. A giant foot trod on it leaving a wet imprint on the diamond tiara of the Dowager Duchess. A pale girl with a stoop paused for a moment. Her face was grey and pinched, her eyes, large, weary, unhappy. Slowly, she bent forward and picked up the paper.

"It's over a week," she muttered. "There won't be an answer now."

Yet, hurriedly she opened the pages "Aunt Ruth's Corner . . ." a little cry broke from the girl. She read aloud . . . "You must tell Alfred all. I know he'll understand and forgive. You can't be happy and not tell him . . ." She HAD answered! And it was true! She couldn't be happy. She WOULD tell Alfred. She'd tell him to-night—now. Yes, he'd understand. Aunt Ruth was right. Colour surged into her wan cheeks. Something came to her eyes. Suddenly she appeared beautiful. With the paper clutched tightly under her arm, she hurried towards a 'bus.

Soon, the paper lay crumpled and dirty on the window ledge of a 'bus. A woman lay back in the seat by the window. Sharp little stabbing pains leapt and danced in her head. She closed her eyes. The little demons seemed to increase their pace. Her hand touched the paper. Wearily she opened her eyes and pulled it on to her lap. Idly she turned the pages. "An animal found in Australia,' eight letters." Of course that was "kangaroo." "One eyed admiral, six letters." "Nelson!" It was ridiculously easy. From her handbag she drew the stub of a pencil. At last she regarded the completed squares with a proud smile. Suddenly she noticed that the pains had gone. She laughed to herself and rose to her feet.

A tall, thickset man, a soiled white scarf about his throat, dropped wearily into the seat that the woman had vacated. He sighed and brushed his forehead with the back of his hand. He picked up the paper which had fallen to the floor and turned to the football results. Good old Arsenal! They'd done it again. They were a fine team. He remembered the last time he'd gone to a Cup Final. . . . His eyes met the headlines on the opposite page. "Boom in Steel . . . the Upton Steel Corporation announce that they are to take back 200 of their old employees on Monday . . ." Something that was half a sob, half a laugh broke from the man. His hand caressed the paper on his knee and his eyes shone with a strange gladness. Soon, as he walked along the crowded pavement, there was a jauntiness in his step and he hummed lightly under his breath. Suddenly he looked under his arm and laughed. He regarded the paper whimsically and then suddenly threw it from him.

A tattered, stunted figure materialised from the gloom and stood regarding the boxes of fruit displayed outside the shop. The man's sharp eyes fell to the newspaper at his feet. He stooped quickly and placed it on the tray of apples. Then whistling lightly under his breath, he bowed his head and made a pretence of reading. "War Clouds in Balkans." Hell! There were always war clouds somewhere. Pity, they didn't hurry up and start another war. They'd come and hang around him then as they'd done twenty years ago. But all the time, his thin dirty hands were busy with the bottom sheets of the paper. Deftly, he formed a parcel that contained four apples. Then leisurely, he transferred the fruits of his theft under his ragged jacket. He stood regarding the top portion of the paper for a while and then whistling jauntily, walked slowly on.

A sudden sweep of the breeze lifted the paper into the gutter and swept it on. At last it came to rest against a seat on the Embankment. A stout, rubicund gentleman approached, placed his jacket at one end of the seat and stretched himself out luxuriously. His hand touched the paper. Yawning, he picked it up.

"This is service," he said languidly.

Holding the paper close against his nose, he regarded the page.

"The Maharajah of Nazimajipur, reputed to be one of the richest men in the world, has not slept for over two years. He is suffering from some form of tropical fever."

The gentleman on the seat muttered the words aloud, yawned again and commenced to pack the paper about his ample thighs.

"Poor bloke," he muttered sleepily, "poor bloke!"

Laughter

The "PASSING SHOW" Smile Section

"Whose idea was the leak in the roof?"

"They're a bit short of fresh fruit, sir, but I scrounged yer a dozen eggs."

"Haven't I told you not to stand around here with your mouth open?"

"That's why we can't find no telephone wires down there, Bill. They're over'ead."

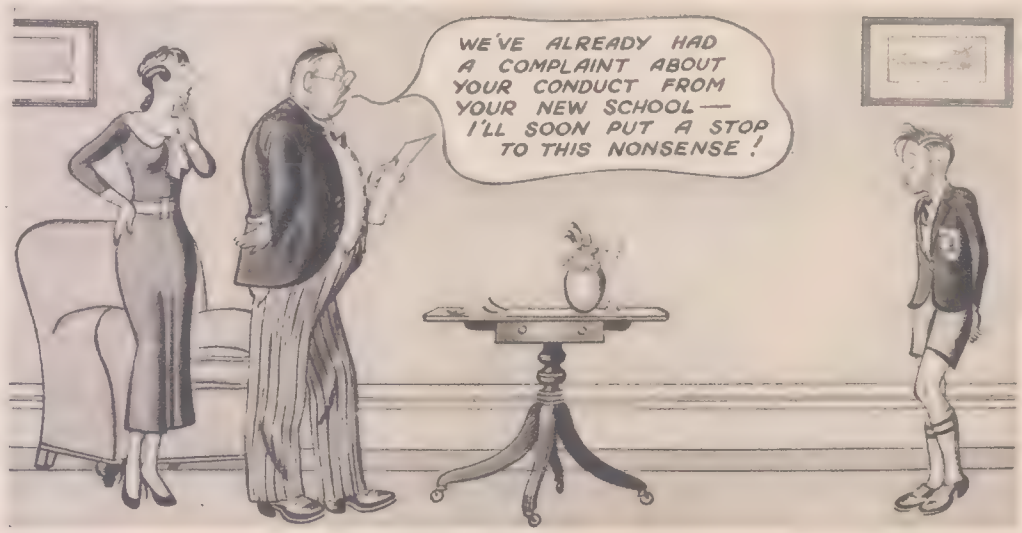
FIRE STATION

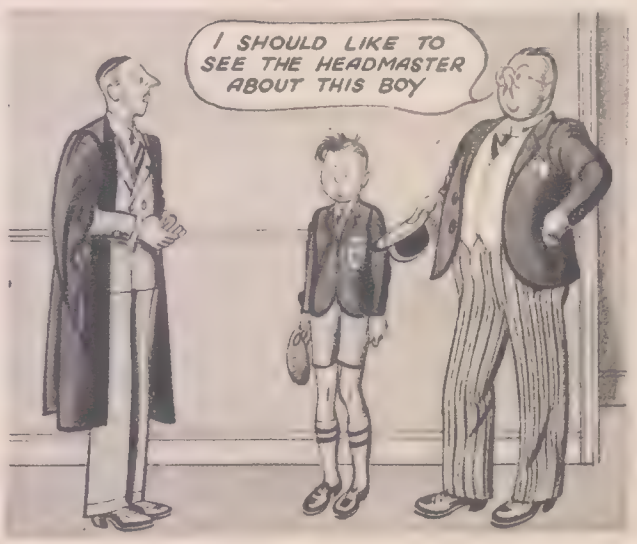
"I'm sorry. The chief's using the engine for his wedding."

"I told my husband, some time ago, that I should prefer a fern to my usual Saturday peppermint lumps."

A MAN AND HIS PAST

by A. C. BARRETT



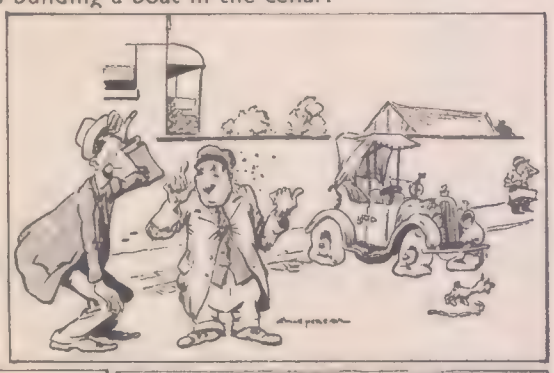


"He's the voice of Annie the Ant in the film cartoons."

"My husband is building a boat in the cellar."

LAUGH WITH THE WORLD

"Taxi, sir?"
"So that's what it is! I've been trying to figure it out for the last ten minutes."
Smith's Weekly, Sydney.

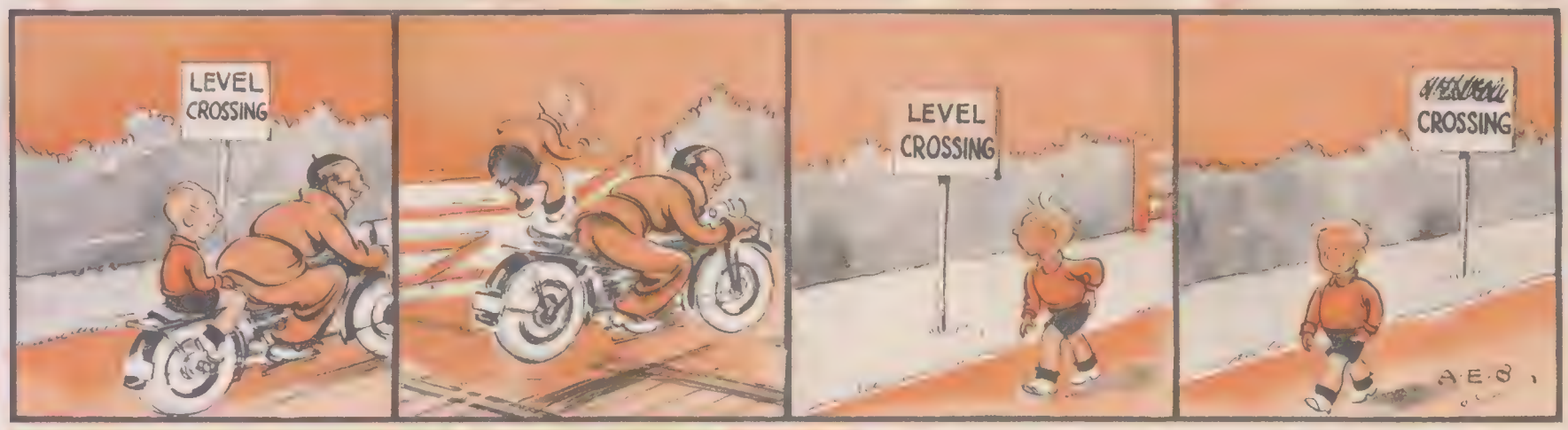


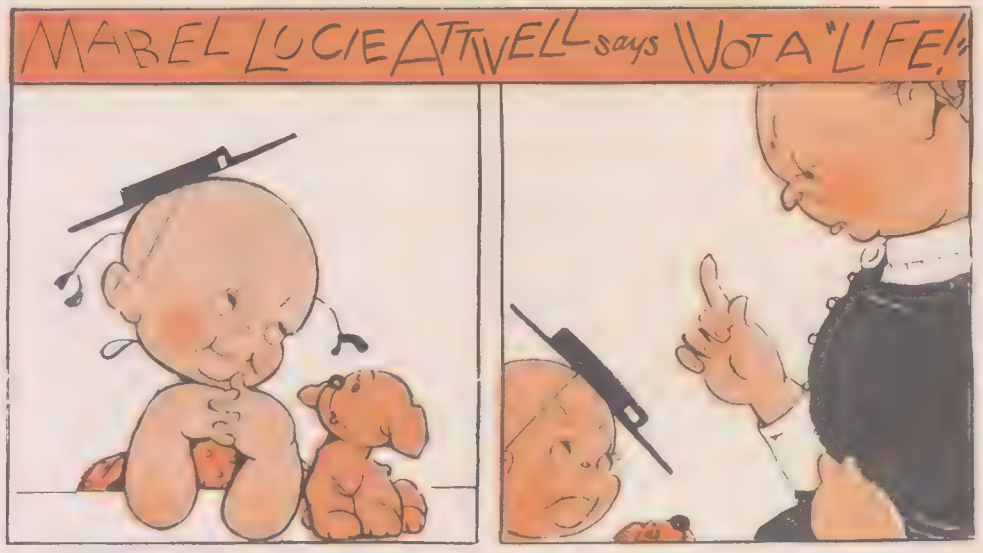
"Think hard now; you had her last. Where did you throw her?"

THE OLD SEA-CAPTAIN'S VILLA.
Sondagsnisse-Strix, Stockholm.

"The penalty for bathing here is five marks."
"But somebody is already bathing here."
"Yes, he has paid in advance."
Munchener Illustrierte Presse.

CHIP





Sometimes I feels I could be good
An' do as folks all wish I would
An' never say a thing I shouldn't—
then sometimes well! I knows I couldn't!

"The wireless is only there temporarily. We've our little nephew staying with us."

OLD BILL and BERT — By BRUCE BAIRNSFATHER

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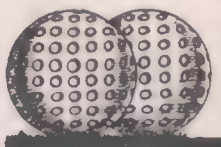

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SECCOTINE
THE DOUBLE STRENGTH ADHESIVE

Valerie Beauchamp, best-seller novelist, is murdered four days after her discovery that she has been hoaxed by members of a literary society, the Esoterics, into believing one of her readers has fallen in love with her. Even though she was demented on hearing that they had been reading her passionate love letters, her will shows that she left £200 a year to each of them. If any of them dies, his income is to be shared by the others. Then starts a reign of terror. Of the six members of the Esoterics, Adelaide Tring is poisoned, Frederick Reeves is shot, and Councillor Stanton is stabbed, while the others—Naomi Garnett, Cyril Sidebotham, and Edward Calcott—are watched by Scotland Yard. Eventually, Calcott is brought to trial, accused of committing the murders. The jury disagrees and, when the judge orders a re-trial, Inspector Martin receives a letter indicating where he can find further evidence to convict Calcott. He decides that his mysterious correspondent is the murderer and starts preparing a trap, by allowing Calcott to "escape" from prison.

by FRANCIS BEEDING

"A sudden report shattered the rustling silence of the hall."

THE Police car stopped with a jerk, Martin and Crosby descended and pushed open the gate of "Avilion." With Sergeant Babbington at their heels, they walked up the drive and rang the bell.

The house appeared to be in darkness but, just as Martin was about to ring again, the door opened and a faint light shone through.

The door was pulled back. Lavinia Brown stood on the threshold.

Martin stepped quickly forward.

"I am sorry to trouble you, Miss Brown, but I am here on an urgent matter."

"Certainly, Inspector. Please come into the library—your friends, too, if they wish."

"Thank you, madam."

Martin had produced a folded slip of paper.

"Madam," he continued, "I have here a warrant to search this house. Will you please be good enough to remain either here or in your drawing room."

"Search the house, Inspector?"

"Yes, madam. As you are aware, Edward Calcott, detained at Brixton on a capital charge, has escaped. We have reason to believe he is in this neighbourhood."

"Have you any reason to think he is here?"

"I am not permitted to think, madam. My orders are to search every house in the district."

"You must do your duty, Inspector."

Martin turned to the two men behind him in the hall.

"Take the top floor, Babbington, and perhaps you, Crosby, would begin below."

Lavinia laid a thin hand upon his sleeve.

"Let me confess, Inspector, that, if that unfortunate young man were under my roof, I should do my utmost to protect him."

Martin looked at her keenly.

"That shows rather a different spirit, madam, if I may say so, than you displayed on a previous occasion."

"I am glad to hear you say that, Inspector. It is, indeed, a different spirit and, if that spirit could reform the world, there would be neither crime nor punishment. We should all be *changed*."

"I am afraid I have no time for that now, madam," answered Martin as he moved toward the door.

"I must again ask you to stay here, madam," he said over his shoulder.

"I shall not move, Inspector."

Martin closed the door behind him and without ceremony turned the key in the lock. In the hall he ran into Crosby.

"Nothing down below, George," he said.

"Stay here, Jim. I'm going above myself."

Martin went quickly upstairs. The landing was bare except for a row of flower-pots with roses beside the balustrades. Sergeant Babbington met him at the foot of the servants' staircase.

"No one in these rooms, sir."

"You have searched everywhere?"

"I should have found a mouse, if it were hidden."

Martin threw open a door and found himself looking into the bedroom where Valerie Beauchamp had died.

"I searched that room thoroughly, sir."

"The balcony?"

"Yes, sir."

Martin crossed the room and pulled open the window. The balcony was dark and empty and, as he stepped on to it, a heavy drop of rain splashed down on his face.

He turned away and in silence descended to the drawing-room. Lavinia Brown met him with a bright smile.

"Well, Inspector, have you finished?"

"Thank you, madam," he said. "I will not trouble you any further this evening."

"Telephone message from Scotland Yard, sir."

Inspector Martin, with Crosby, entering the Highwood police station, was met by the sergeant in charge.

"What is the message, Jones?"

"You are asked to return at once, sir."

"What's the idea?"

"The idea, sir, seems to be that important new evidence has come to hand."

Martin turned to Crosby.

"Perhaps you'd better stay here, Jim. I'll ring up from the Yard. This, I imagine, will be another mare's nest."

And such he considered it when, on arriving at the Yard, he was informed that the Editor of the *Daily Wire* had asked to speak with him urgently on the telephone. He went to his room and was put through to Mr. Adrian Willows.

"Inspector Martin here."

"This is Adrian Willows. I've just had a cable from Rio de Janiero. It's about the Highwood cases and I think it may be important."

"Go ahead."

"It seems that our representative, Mr. Doubleday, reported to be lost at sea in the Jersey aeroplane six weeks ago, was picked up by a tramp. The boat had no wireless and Doubleday was unconscious for several days. He woke up to find that he was well on his way to Rio. He was, as you know, interested in the Highwood cases and was following a line of his own.

"He had intended to report to you as soon as he had anything really definite to go upon. On landing at Rio this morning he heard of the arrest and trial of Edward Calcott and, in view of the fact that the case is to be heard again, he has sent me an urgent telegram. Shall I read it?"

"If you will be so kind."

Mr. Willows began to read:

"*Please communicate urgently Inspector Martin stop Have reason to believe Lavinia Brown has confederate associated with Highwood cases stop Suggest Scotland Yard examine Jacob Teesdale 36 Islip Mansions Earls Court.*"

Mr. Adrian Willows ceased.

"Is that all?" inquired Inspector Martin.

"That's the message, Inspector, and I hope you will find it useful."

"Thank you, Mr. Willows. We will look into the matter."

Inspector Martin, replacing the receiver, looked at his watch. It was half-past

The Final Drama

ILLUSTRATED BY
JACK M. FAULKS

eleven. Was it worth while calling on Mr. Teesdale that night? He rang the bell on his desk.

"Get on to the Earl's Court Station. Ask the station-sergeant to go round at once to 36 Islip Mansions and find whether Mr. Jacob Teesdale is at home. If he is in his flat, put a man on to see that he does not leave it unobserved. Report to me here as soon as possible."

"Very good, sir."

While Martin sat back and considered the matter there came a tap on the door and Sergeant Wilks came into the room. He carried in his hand a little book bound in green linen and the finger-print file of the Highwood cases. Martin looked at him in surprise as, without preliminary, the sergeant walked quickly towards him.

"You're working late, Wilks," he said.

"Good work, Inspector."

"What's the excitement?"

"I've something to show you, sir."

He laid on Martin's blotting-pad, as he spoke, the little green book. Martin picked it up and read, stamped on the corner in gilt, the word "Thumbograph."

Martin opened the book. It was covered with prints of thumbs and fingers, mostly in violet ink, with names attached to them. On one of the pages, marked with a blue slip, was an excellent print of a thumb and forefinger.

Martin gazed at it for a moment.

"Well?" he said.

Sergeant Wilks, without a word, opened the finger-print file, took from it a photograph and handed it to Martin.

Martin looked at the photograph and compared it with the print in the thumbograph.

For a moment he seemed at a loss, staring incredulously from the photograph to the print in the thumbograph and back again. His mind was working furiously.

His hands were trembling as he laid the photograph back on the table. He looked at Sergeant Wilks, whose eyes were shining with excitement.

"Absolutely identical, sir," said Sergeant Wilks.

Martin pointed to the little green book.

"Where did it come from? How did you get it?"

"It was brought to me an hour ago from the Missing Persons Department. It came by to-night's mail from Melbourne."

For a moment Inspector Martin held conviction at bay. He must be sure. Could there be any flaw in his reasoning?

No. The inference was clear.

He knew now who was the murderer.

He knew, too, that the murderer must be waiting at "Avilion"—waiting to strike again.

He sprang to the telephone.

Less than a minute later, as he seized his hat and made to leave the room, a constable appeared in the corridor outside.

"Message from Earl's Court, sir."

"Yes, what is it?"

"Mr. Jacob Teesdale, sir, is not at home."

"Thank you, constable. I'll see to it later."

Down below in the courtyard he signalled to the waiting car.

"Highwood," he said, "as fast as you can make it."

"Of course, I'm greedy. So would you be if your last meal had been sandwiches in a police car."

Edward spoke with his mouth full.

"Besides," he added, "this pie is very good."

Naomi beamed at him. They were sitting on the Canon's leather trunk in the attic and the only light came from a naked bulb hanging among the rafters.

"Burgundy, too?" Edward continued. "What would your father say to that?"

"Father will never know."

Edward sipped the wine.

"Chambertin, by jove," he murmured, "and 1928 by the feel of it."

"You know too much about wine, Edward."

"I hope to know still more before I die," he answered, highly gratified.

He glanced at his watch.

"Nearly eleven o'clock," he said. "I wonder how the police are getting on at 'Avilion'?"

Naomi turned a sympathetic face towards him.

"Have another class of burgundy?"

She was pouring out the wine when the telephone bell rang.

"I must answer that," she said.

"Leave it to Ada."

"Ada has gone to bed. I must go now in any case. Parents will be home any moment."

She kissed him lightly and sped quickly away down the stairs.

"I want to speak to Miss Naomi Garnett," came a deep voice as she unhooked the receiver.

She did not immediately recognise the speaker.

"Miss Garnett speaking," she said.

"This is Inspector Martin here."

"Yes?"

"Listen, Miss Garnett, I have decided to make a slight change in my plans. Nothing serious, but will you please do what I am going to suggest?"

"Of course."

"I want you and Mr. Calcott to go straight to 'Avilion.' You will be quite safe, both of you. Ask for Miss Brown and keep her in conversation until we appear. There is no danger, you understand?"

"Do you want us to go at once?"

"Certainly. I can rely on you, Miss Garnett? It is most important."

"Of course, Inspector. We will start immediately."

Naomi put up the receiver.

Edward looked up as she entered. He was finishing the bottle.

"Caught in the act," he said, as she burst into the attic.

"Edward," she said, "that was Inspector Martin. He wants us to go at once to 'Avilion.' We are to talk to Lavinia until he turns up."

Edward was on his feet.

"Both of us?"

"Yes, both of us."

"Look here, Naomi, I don't much like the idea. I should prefer to go alone."

Naomi pressed her lips together.

"Orders is orders. The Inspector said there was no danger. He also said that it was most important."

She took him by the hand and pulled him to his feet. He ceased suddenly to resist and followed her. On the landing below, Naomi paused.

"One moment," she said. "I must get a hat."

She slipped into her room and a second later appeared, cramming a small hat on her head.

"Come on," she said. "We will go out by the drawing-room window—in case of parents. Then we'll cross the garden and exit through gap in hedge."

They crossed the drawing-room and Edward opened the french window cautiously.

"Here we are," Naomi said.

They passed through the garden gate of "Avilion" and walked up the path to the front door.

There was a light in the drawing-room window and Edward had hardly touched the bell when the door opened. A dark figure stood on the threshold.

"Naomi, is that you? And where is the poor fugitive?"

Lavinia Brown was looking eagerly from the dim hall into the darkness.

"Edward is here," answered Naomi.

"Come in quickly before you are seen."

Lavinia spoke urgently and Edward, folding the umbrella, walked in behind Naomi.

"The light in the hall has fused or the lamp is worn out," said Lavinia. "Come into the drawing-room."

The hall was, in fact, nearly in darkness, lit only by a lamp that shone on the landing above.

Naomi moved forward and Edward put out a hand to restrain her, not liking the look of the darkened house. Naomi, was too quick for him and, by the time he had entered the hall, she was standing in the well of the staircase.

It was then that he glanced up to the landing above. Something had moved.

"Naomi!" he shouted suddenly.

Naomi started back, but it was too late. One of the heavy flowerpots on the balustrade was falling. It caught her right on the shoulder. She fell against the banisters and the heavy pot crashed in fragments about her.

Edward, forgetting everything, sprang forward, but, as he did so, something came at him from behind—soft and enveloping. His head was jerked backwards and his arms entangled.

He tore desperately at the impediment, realising with a thrill of horror that he had been literally caught in a net.

He tore wildly at the meshes, but was jerked backwards and fell helpless, perceiving, as he sprawled to the ground, that a dark, slight figure was coming down the stairs towards him.

Naomi, white and faint, was on her knees. Above him gleamed the face of Lavinia, dragging at the net, exultant and grotesque, while on the stairs, he was dreadfully aware of a light patter of feet and the sudden gleam of a naked blade.

"Light," said the oncomer.

There was a click and, in the light that now flooded the hall, Edward saw within reach of him the figure of a man dressed in dark clothes and wearing horn-rimmed spectacles.

Then, in a flash, he realised who it was, but, even as he did so, still tearing at the clinging net, and even as the blade was lifted, a sudden report shattered the rustling silence of the hall.

The dark figure stopped dead, jerked unnaturally and pitched forward heavily to the stone floor.

Another figure, pistol in hand, had rushed in from the drawing-room and

(*please turn to page* 24)

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Edward, scrambling to his knees, found himself face to face with Inspector Martin kneeling beside his kill.

So for a brief instant they remained on their knees together looking down at the dead body of Valerie Beauchamp.

Inspector George Martin, with a smile half satisfied, half cynical, sat to his desk. Nothing succeeds like success and his reception that morning at the Yard had left nothing to be desired. How differently things would have gone with him had that last problematic device of his miscarried. He could see in fancy the older men shaking their wise heads. But his plan had succeeded. It was now a brilliant stroke of intuition. It justified the new school which placed a premium on imagination and psychology. Twenty-four hours ago it had, nevertheless, been fantastic, new-fangled, playing with fire, riding for a fall, and all the rest of it.

As well it might have been.

Crosby's desk was vacant. Already he had been diverted to other work, a bad case of embezzlement in the Moorgate Branch of the Larrimore Bank. Martin had the room to himself. He pulled forward his chair. He had now to draft his report.

He would begin with the thumbograph. That had been the decisive piece of evidence and he must make its significance as clear to the reader as it had been to him in that moment of blinding revelation when he had set forth in haste for "Avilion" in the sure knowledge that he would find there the woman whom they had believed to be dead and buried.

The thumbograph was lying on the desk in front of him. Martin picked it up and turned the pages. It was the first he had seen, though he had often heard of this fashionable craze of collecting finger-prints as souvenirs. Strange that so foolish a toy sent by the Melbourne police as a means of identifying a missing Australian tourist, should also have been the means of exposing the most ingenious trick in his experience.

The thumbograph now showed that the prints claimed to be those of the dead novelist were really those of the unknown Australian girl, Elizabeth Hamsworth, last seen at Kingston on the day of Valerie Beauchamp's death. It followed, therefore, as the night the day, that the prints of Series B, found on the rake, on the window-sill and on the tooth-glass in the bathroom, assumed to be those of the murderer, were the prints of Valerie Beauchamp herself. Valerie Beauchamp, in fact, had deliberately left her own finger-prints, which in normal cases afforded damning evidence of guilt, as a means not only of diverting suspicion upon an unknown criminal but of establishing the fact of her own death by violence.

And but for the thumbograph she would have succeeded.

Martin sat back and pictured the scene. She must have met the Australian girl on the outskirts of the suburb. She would have had little difficulty in luring the woman back to her house and presumably she had offered to put her victim up for the night. By that time the whole incredible scheme had worked itself out. The girl had been put to bed in the novelist's own room and there had been murdered. Valerie Beauchamp had then, with her victim still warm, brought various articles, easily portable, like her hair brushes and the golden pen and the picture covering the safe, and pressed the dead fingers upon them. She had then gone down into the garden and effected an entry to her bedroom, leaving her own prints on the rake, the window-sill and the tooth-glass.

The work of disfigurement should have suggested a deliberate intention to make identification impossible. Identification had in fact been established on dental evidence alone, and here again a clue had been offered but ignored. Mr. Penfold of Wimpole Street had certified certain stoppings to be those which he had himself placed in the mouth of his distinguished patient. He had failed to observe—and Martin himself had failed to point out—that the stoppings might feasibly have been removed from the mouth of a living woman—a comparatively simple operation—and planted in that of the corpse.

Valerie Beauchamp had always given herself out to be the daughter of a naval surgeon. But she had omitted the word dental in her specification, doubtless from the same feeling for appearances that had prompted her to call herself Valerie Beauchamp instead of Vera Brown. Researches after the event had disclosed that her father, on leaving the Navy, had set up in private practice in Chester in the far north and that Valerie herself had acted as his assistant and had received some kind of training.

That she had herself performed the operation was proved by the discovery in the flower-bed, which had been raked smooth beneath the balcony, of a small bundle of dental instruments of a rather old-fashioned type. So that business with the rake had served a double purpose—concealing the tools of the criminal and pointing to an unknown marauder who was to be suspected of the crime.

How often had Martin since remembered the comment of Wilks, the finger-print expert: "No professional would rake over the footmarks and leave his finger-prints on the rake handle." It seemed a recurring feature of this humiliating case that at every turn he had held in his grasp essential clues and that at every turn he had missed their significance.

Inspector Martin noted down a second head on the sheet of paper in front of him.

So much for the finger-prints and the dental evidence.

The third section of his report, he decided, should be devoted to a reconstruction of the movements of Valerie Beauchamp from the night on which she had committed her first murder down to the night when she had decoyed Edward Calcott and Naomi Garnett to "Avilion." That was a simple matter to present, but it had meant a great deal of patient work at the Yard.

Crosby had gone once more to Marseilles, protesting against the length of the journey but bringing back with him the sworn testimony of the chemist who had sold the arsenic and of Pierre, the waiter of the Cafe of the Vieux Port, who had sold the pistol. Both of them, when shown a photograph of Valerie Beauchamp dressed in her man's clothes and taken within a quarter of an hour of her death, had not hesitated to identify her as the person who had purchased these articles, while Mr. Busby had found it possible to declare that here at last was the person who had come to his shop on Friday the 9th of June wearing horn-rimmed spectacles.

The same photograph, moreover, had been put into the hands of every police station in the Metropolitan Area with the result that the reception-clerk at the Westmoreland Hotel, near the Marble Arch, the proprietor of the Wavertree Hotel in Bloomsbury Square, the managers of the Percy Hotel and Cock-o'-the-North Boarding Establishment in the Euston Road and the proprietors of three other establishments in the neighbourhood had all testified that the original of the picture had registered with them under different names—Ellingham, Shorthouse, Bradfield.

All those names had been in the handwriting of Valerie Beauchamp. Thus she had wandered, disguised as a man, from one small room to another, changing her abode almost every night to emerge upon her errands of death as and when the opportunity offered.

Being dead, how could she be suspected? Being seen, how could anyone discover in her the woman who had been laid to rest in Highwood Cemetery? In point of fact she had been seen but once, a slim figure in a black hat slipping away into the darkness of the common from the body of Joshua Stanton. No one had seen her at the door of the "Old Hut" on the morning when arsenic had been put into the milk of Adelaide Tring. No one had seen her lurking under the trees on the night when Freddy Reeves had been shot at the wheel of his car. No one had seen her climbing the staircase at Baffin's Court when the damning evidence against Edward Calcott was planted in the room of Arthur Scott-Digby. These were gaps which only imagination could fill.

Inspector Martin rose from the table and walked to the window. It was a hot and airless day. Only the river seemed alive and in motion. He stood a moment watching a barge breasting the strong tide.

He had now to plot the final section of his report and he reviewed the facts in his mind with mixed feelings. The ruse whereby he had provoked the criminal to strike again had, in fact, succeeded, but he could not claim to have matched his wits successfully against those of the mad woman. She had seen through the false escape of Edward Calcott and turned it to her own advantage. Almost he had been hoist with his own petard. All that part of the story had been painfully reconstructed from the ravings of Lavinia Brown interpreted by the psychiatrist in charge of the home where she was now confined.

Valerie Beauchamp, it seemed, had not been in communication with Lavinia Brown until after the arrival of Edward Calcott at the vicarage. That evening she had appeared suddenly at "Avilion" and at once Lavinia had become her devoted accomplice. Lavinia under her direction had telephoned to Naomi. But Valerie Beauchamp had not neglected to provide against a possible visit of the police as a first result of this manœuvre, and she had therefore arranged to be missing when the inevitable search was made.

Lavinia Brown, amid her ravings, had made frequent references to a tree. Her mistress had, in fact, taken refuge in the spreading cedar whose branches were easily accessible from the balcony of her room. Then, when the search had been completed and the police had left, she had returned to her room and directed Lavinia to telephone again to Naomi—this time in the voice of Martin himself, an imitation easily within her powers. Thus she had very nearly succeeded in using his own plan to defeat him.

More than once since the day on which he had arrived only just in time to save the last of the Esoterics Martin had lain awake in a sweat of panic, remembering how near he had come to black and final disaster.

Suppose, for example, on that fatal night he had dashed off upon the trail of the quaint but harmless Mr. Jacob Teesdale of Islip Mansions. . . .

Martin, noting his fourth head, looked dubiously at the sheet. He had succeeded more by good luck than management. Valerie Beauchamp had outplayed him even in that final round. Had it not been for the arrival of the thumbograph and his prompt reading of its significance, he would have been branded irremediably as the young man who was too clever by half and yet not clever enough to outwit the crazy woman who, having successfully baited her trap, had waited that summer night to complete the tale of her victims.

But men were judged by results, and his luck had saved him at the last.

Thus it had come about that Edward Calcott and Naomi Garnett—who would be Naomi Calcott when next he had the pleasure of meeting her—were at the moment, according to information received, choosing carpets and cretonnes at the Weldon Furnishing Company in Victoria Street.

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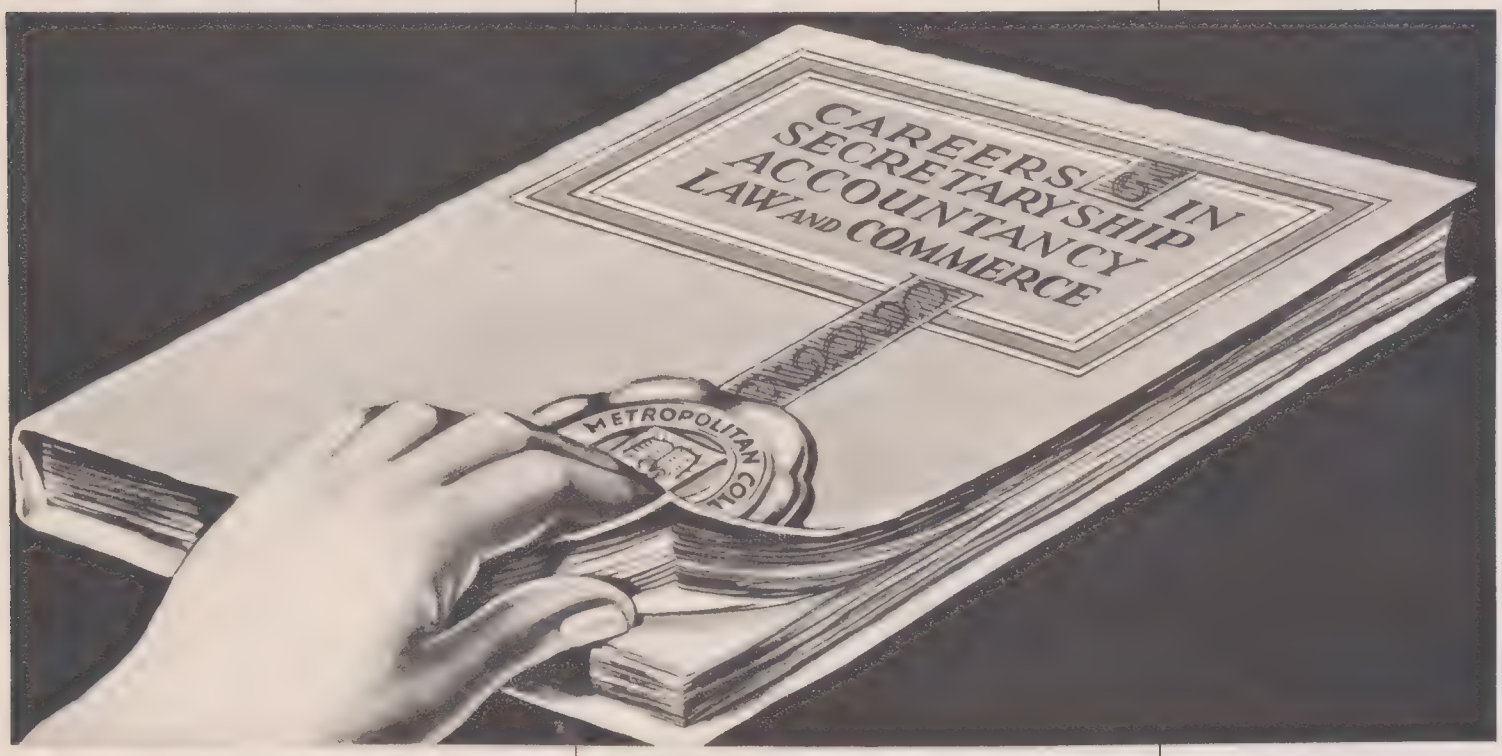

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Happiness for Three

THAT families are so much smaller these days is probably responsible for the fact that the coming of a baby is much more a "family" event than it used to be. It is no longer taken for granted as inevitable. Little Jane, Anne, Tommy, George, Wilfrid, and Sarah's arrival are no longer to be banked on as annual celebrations and the baby clothes are not handed down from Mother's or Grandmother's days like they used to be.

The modern baby has his own layette and all his cousins and his aunts and a few chosen friends help his mother-to-be to make it for him. Much more too is properly done to ensure his safe arrival and the young couple of to-day, with the directness of modern outlook and scientific knowledge cannot do better than set out at the start to budget for these new responsibilities.

After all, it will probably be "father" who has to foot the bill in the partnership.

Budgeting for a baby is a little like budgeting for a new home, always remembering that in this case of course the outlay is for the health of the mother and baby. But in both directions the essential is a good foundation and after that one can pay as much as one likes for the extra luxuries.

With a little forethought, by the way, it is even possible to insure against twins, at from two guineas per cent. But the policy must be taken out before the end of the third month.

Whether baby is to be born at home or in a nursing home or hospital, is usually the first decision to be made. It should be considered from the point of view of the amount of real rest and care that can be ensured for the mother and baby at home. Is there some really capable friend or relation, who can come to the rescue and, without upsetting everybody, run the home smoothly and if need be (depending on medical arrangements) help to care for the mother and baby?

Visiting nurses, who are fully qualified midwives, can be engaged locally to care for the young mother at the arrival and visit her for ten days after; the fee being from two guineas. They will also advise her about her health at regular intervals during the waiting months, but naturally, a very sensible person needs to be in the house in addition, after baby is born.

For the great majority of middle class homes, however, if it is decided that baby shall be born in this Englishman's castle, the arrangement will be in favour of a doctor and a living in maternity nurse. It is difficult to give absolute figures of cost because charges, like facilities, vary in different parts of the country and in London are almost always higher than the provinces, but a doctor's fee will vary from about eight guineas. It is usually accepted that this includes his attention for the confinement and subsequent ten days.

The question of ante-natal care should be talked over with him too, in making arrangements and be provided for as it would be in a hospital.

The fees of such nurses range from three to five guineas a week and they are usually booked for three to four weeks, sometimes five. If this sounds expensive, it may be added that a good nurse at this time is worth her weight in gold.

Usually the doctor knows of a nurse with whom he is accustomed to work, but if not, it is a good plan to engage one through one of the big maternity hospitals so that if there is any mistake over dates and the baby arrives early another nurse can be sent for in the emergency.

All such arrangements are of course simply for the couple to consider and plan quietly for themselves. The layette, however, causes a flutter among the relations straightway, for if all the world loves a lover, few grannies and aunts at any rate are exempt from adoring a new baby.

On a layette obviously almost any sum may be spent, but a practical minimum outfit would include the following items:

Three wrap-over vests in fine wool or silk and wool.

Four day gowns, or six "day and night gowns."

Four night gowns.

Four matinée coats of fine wool.

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WOMAN to WOMAN by Len Chaloner

When planning for the arrival of baby, father must not be "frozen out." Prepare for three people's happiness

making, along with pram covers and pillow-slips, competing only with matinee coatsand a baby hair brush. The modern layette is often planned in the fashion described with silk or fine wool frocks to avoid the washing as well as wearing of petticoats with the complication of subsequent "short-coating."

Another good opportunity for relations, however, comes with the planning of a nursery. The essential items of expense in a nursery are a cot, a baby bath, preferably on a stand, a nursing chair and a basket or trolley for baby's bath things, with finally, a chest or cupboard for keeping the little clothes. A pram has also to be budgeted remember.

To bestow a deliciously fluffy cot is usually an irresistible temptation to grandmothers, and worth the thrill for a first baby. But if it has to be included in the budget at this expensive time, the most useful economy is to buy one that will last the baby for two or three years. Anything smaller than 2 feet 6 inches is outgrown after the first year and involves not only the purchase of a new cot but also bedding. Prams range from two pounds upwards. A pleasant looking vehicle of the traditional shape runs about five guineas. It is wise to earmark the chosen style in advance, making it a simple matter for father to conclude the purchase after the baby has arrived.

It may also be a good plan to spend an extra pound on getting one that will allow later for a sitting up child as well as a lying down one.

A baby basket is almost certain to come as a present. If not, it can be had with the nursing chair for well under two pounds. A trolley costs more but lasts longer. If a chest of drawers has to be bought a miniature one is useful with an eye to training the toddler later on.

The personal needs of mother and baby for the event will be given in a separate list by nurse, if baby is to be born at home. Dressings to-day are usually ordered in sterilised drums, which cost about 27s., and greatly simplify matters for all concerned; they can be obtained in advance and remain in perfect condition until the drum is opened at the proper time.

Sometimes the consideration of all these details leads the parents to decide that the limitations of their home or domestic arrangements would make it more convenient for baby to be born in a hospital or nursing home. It may be easier to make a more definite budget by this means, with many items "included."

The fees at a hospital include antenatal care, the services of the doctor and anæsthetist and, of course, nursing. In London the fees for a private ward would begin at five guineas a week, but the Registrar would need to be approached at an early date as hospitals do not care to take patients whom they have not been in touch with during the waiting months. The budget should provide for three weeks in hospital and for another week at home before the mother takes up her full responsibilities.

No charges or administration vary so widely as those of nursing homes. One may be so fortunate as to learn of one that is really sound where the fees are specially arranged for "hard up" professional folk, starting as low as three and a half to four guineas a week, but, naturally, such places are few in number and in constant demand.

There are many admirable nursing homes where the mother and baby will be well cared for at five or six guineas a week, with of course, her doctor's fees as an extra. The important thing is to make careful enquiry through the family doctor, or strangers in a district may get advice from the local health authorities.

Babies may be an expensive hobby, but they are a worth while one and much too much stress has been laid on the "duty" of parenthood instead of the honest joy and enjoyment that children bring along with their responsibility and care. Ideally, I think that it is happiest to have the baby at home if it can be managed, but more and more circumstances would seem to incline towards confinements being arranged for in hospitals or nursing homes to save upset in the home.

One seldom considered person on this occasion is the father of the family. Few women appreciate that if he cares for his wife, he too, has his own special worries and problems at this expensive and rather anxious time.

He does not deserve to be "frozen out" of the arrangements as he too often is, so that all plans should be made for three, and not just two people's happiness.

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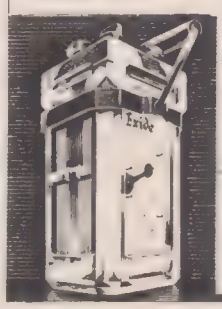
'THAT WAS AGES AGO!'



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TATTOO

"Through the gathering darkness the trawler had loomed with eerie abruptness"

SHORT STORY (*with a "Catch"*)

STRIKE JUSTICE

by John Elton

THE gloom of the shed surrounded him, a loose, speckled kind of darkness throwing into dim relief the intensity of his figure. He tipped his cap to the back of his head, and then, hinging back his neck till the fat bulged over his untidy collar, peered into the sunlight through a chink in the timbers.

"He's still there," he muttered.

The object of his observation, revealed to him through the crack like an elongated snapshot, was a short, thin man in a brown tweed suit, leaning against a lamp-post in the roadway outside and directing his eyes over a piece of waste ground to the wharf and the sluggish river. Behind him, over the chimney pots of a muddled heap of houses, could be seen a line of cranes, like a file of disorderly sentinels with bayonets aslant, marking the quays of the dockyard. The cranes were still.

"He looks like a 'tec," muttered the man with the untidy collar, "but even so, he's probably only just keeping an eye open for those dockyard strikers. In fact, Harry, in spite of what they did to us last night, those strikers're being a bit useful in some ways."

Harry, pulling on a jacket amid a jumble of packing cases, corks and tattered fishing nets, nodded a serious head. "You mean, they're keeping the police busy?"

"Busier than they care to be. This strike's one of the biggest there's been for years—in these parts, anyway. And lucky it is for us, too. Things've been mighty uncomfortable recently. Damn uncomfortable they've been."

"They were damn uncomfortable last night," growled Harry, "in more ways than one."

"Smuggling's all right," he grumbled. "Whisky or tobacco or silks is one thing, but this opium business is another. If we were caught with so much as a shred of that stuff on us, William—glory, what a time we'd have! Last night I got real scared, and real fed up too. Lost a fortune we did!"

William nodded. The events of the night before still depressed him. For two years Harry and he had been using this shed as the centre of their activities, having originally chosen the heart of the dockyards as the field of operations in which they were the least likely to be suspected.

Simple fishermen they seemed, slipping down the estuary every evening with their *Tamarisk* and their tackle, and returning many hours later with their varying loads of fish. Who could ever suspect them of being a valuable link in a great drug-smuggling chain?

Yet during recent weeks they had become increasingly fearful. Somehow the police had registered the flow of smuggled drugs from the dockyards, and somehow, through the dread agency of their secret and complicated machinery, had narrowed down the region necessitating observation to their particular piece of waterfront.

William and Harry, together with the other fishermen in the neighbourhood, had felt themselves watched, but they had placed their confidence in their ingenuity and had continued their foul work without pause. Good fortune had been with them—until last night. And even last night, at first, had seemed in their favour, for the dock hands, on strike these last four days, had suddenly become troublesome and had commanded the full energies of the land police.

William remembered his remark of yesterday evening quite clearly. "From our point of view," he had laughed as he had swung himself from the iron ladder of the coal wharf on to the swaying deck of their lugger, "it's the best thing that could've happened. There's going to be real trouble. Them dock hands're getting beyond themselves. Old Samuel told me—they're trying to stop all food supplies so's to bring the townspeople agitating for a settlement. Might hurry things up, they think. Just the sort of muddle-up we want, Harry, to go about our good work unnoticed."

And so, at first, it had seemed. With a feeling of solid security in their stomachs they had jerked the auxiliary motor of the *Tamarisk* into a spluttering energy and watched the streaks of sizzling foam spinning to the wharves behind them.

The first half of the evening had passed in perfect smoothness. Eventually they had silenced the fussy auxiliary, hoisted sail, and felt the *Tamarisk* heeling gently to the wind. The receding shores of the estuary had rolled past them.

Soon the *Tamarisk* had lifted to the rollers of the open sea, closely packed waves bouncing against her bows and flying over her in speeding clouds of spray, the turmoil of her wake spreading in an undulating road behind her. For two hours they had sailed, and then, "There she is!" William had chuckled. "Dead ahead of us."

Through the gathering darkness the trawler had loomed with eerie abruptness, giving the impression of a hollow-backed hippopotamus as she wallowed in the seas. They had given their rehearsed signal and received their rehearsed reply, and thereupon had hove to, lowered canvas, and relied upon their auxiliary to take them alongside.

The exchange of goods had been simplicity itself, and within a few minutes the business had been completed. The *Tamarisk*, curtsying to the rusty iron flanks of the trawler, had spluttered and gathered speed, having now on board a tiny but precious load of opium, a large box of wet fish, and an innocent fishing net with a damaged mesh and many traces of seaweed.

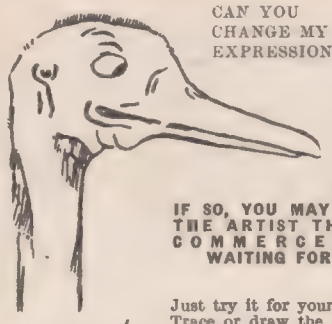
It was then, William remembered, that Harry had first fallen into his usual fit of nervousness. "Sure nothing's about?" he had asked. "If we get caught with this packet——"

"The safest thing you can do," William had barked in reply, "is to take the helm while I get to work and hide the stuff."

From its locker the small box of opium had been taken with infinite care. From the slimy box amidships had been selected four or five of the fattest mackerel, and William, with a knife as sharp as a razor and fat fingers as delicate as a jeweller's, had slit open two inches of their thick bellies and removed a certain amount of the flesh from inside. The opium, already packed in small waterproof cartridges, had then been slipped into the place of the removed flesh, the openings had been closed, and had then been invisibly skewered into place with tiny slivers of wood.

With the utmost care William had marked every fish treated in this way by snipping off a corner of the tail, and he had then buried them one by one among the mackerel in the box amidships.

(*please turn to page* 30)



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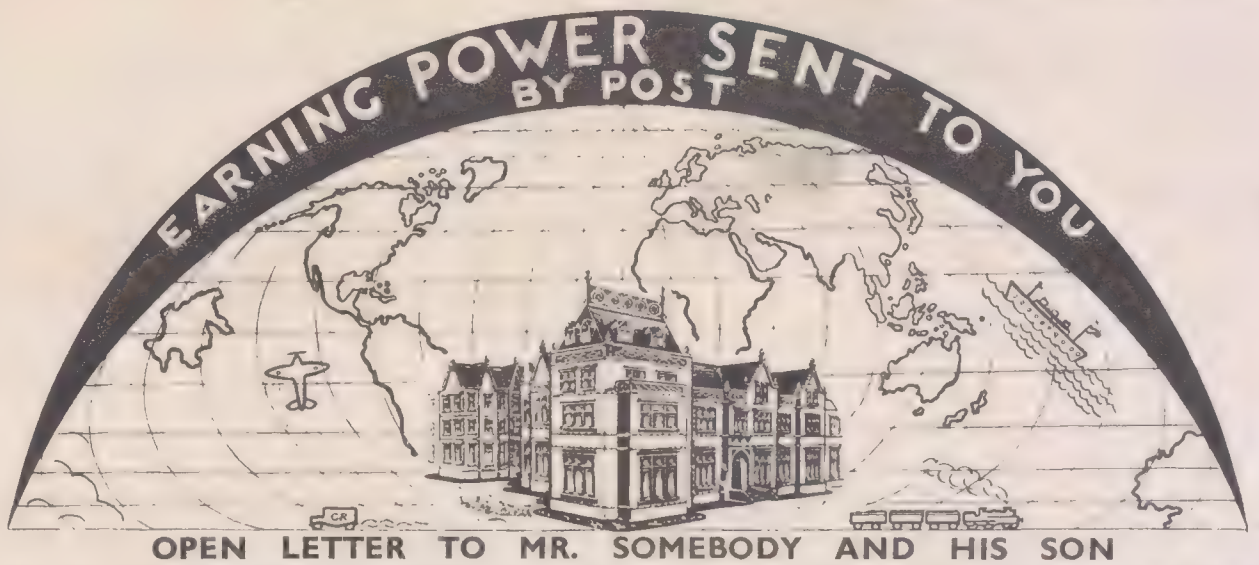

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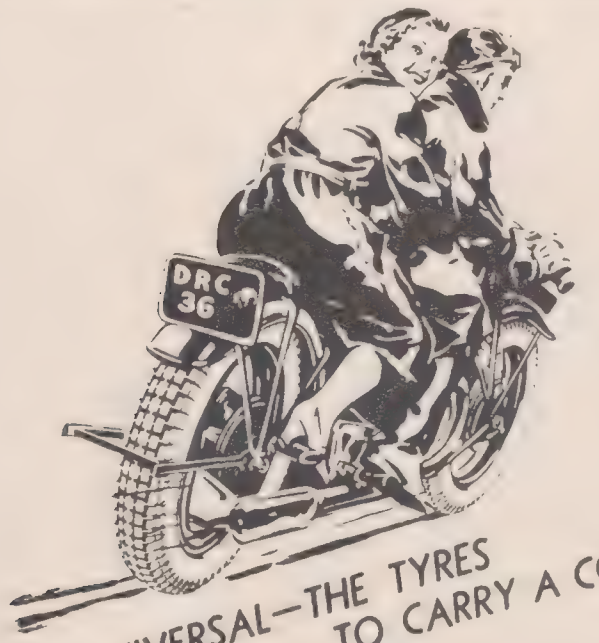

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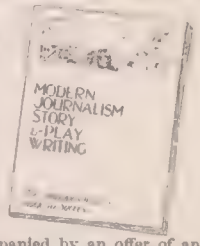

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CONTINUING

Strike Justice

"Now what've we got to fear?" he had asked, unbending his back with a smile. "What if even a police boat comes alongside and searches us? We're plain fishermen. We've got our nets and a boxful of fresh mackerel. Genuine fish!" William had laughed loudly with the joy of his confidence in their ingenuity, and the *Tamarisk*, as if in harmony with his convulsions, had bucked violently at a back-wave and slid giggling into the trough.

Who would have guessed at the events to follow? The most difficult part of their job had been accomplished. The rest of it, in the usual way, was simplicity itself, for even if they had been watched with intensity, their movements would have given no cause for suspicion. On the next day, in the ordinary way, they would have pushed their barrow through the streets, selling their fish to whoever heard their call and leaving the usual plateful (of mackerel with snipped tails) at Mrs. Black's house in Blower Street. How could their scheme go wrong? For two years it had been successful.

Yet go wrong it did. They had lost the whole of their precious cargo. The whole of it . . . .

William awoke from his angry thoughts and once again put his eye to the chink in the wall of their shed. "He's still there," he growled. "I don't like the look of him. 'Tec every inch of him. . . . Trouble is, we've got to let old Mother Black know what's happened. She'll be expecting that load this morning, and there'll be trouble if we don't see her."

Harry wiped his hands down the sides of his jacket. "Blamed awkward. If that chap's a 'tec, he'll follow us there, and there ain't much sense in leading police to Mother Black's place and giving away our connections."

"Tell you what," said William. "We'll go different ways. There's only one 'tec—if he is a 'tec, that is. Whoever's not followed can go on to Mother Black, and if neither of us is followed, we'll meet there. Simple."

They left their shed, took their leave of each other in the most natural way, and walked in opposite directions. The man in the brown suit blew his nose and took no notice of them.

William took a long route. He crossed a wide square, and then, on the other side, stepped casually into the porch of a shop to glance through the angle made by the window and examine the square behind him. The man in the brown suit made no appearance. He could see a woman pushing a perambulator, and an errand boy with a basket, and a couple of men with bags of tools over their shoulders, but no man in brown; and so William, with much relief, continued on his way, and caught a 'bus to Blower Street.

He did not notice the taxi winding its way slowly through the traffic behind his omnibus. He settled himself into his seat, and once again gave his thoughts to the misfortune of the previous evening. Even now the shock of his loss had not left him. It was hard to believe that they had actually hoodwinked the police, yet had lost their precious cargo.

The *Tamarisk* had behaved splendidly on the homeward run. When within the estuary they had lowered sail and urged the auxiliary into life so as to negotiate with greater ease the narrowing fairway. And then, out of the darkness a launch had come, had slipped beside them, had issued the sharp command to stop. "I'd like to have a look over your boat," a man in a mackintosh had told them, and at once he had produced papers and cards to prove his authority to do so. For a minute or two William had felt his heart quickening with fear, but he had reminded himself of the craftiness of the drug's concealment, and at last he had said, "Aye, come aboard, by all means."

Floorboards had been lifted, planks probed, lockers pulled out. The boxful of gleaming fish had been emptied on to the floorboards, and the man in the mackintosh had raked through the slimy heap with his fingers. But it had passed examination. The police had been hoodwinked!

William still remembered the exultation he had felt as he had watched the man in the mackintosh clamber back into his launch. "Sorry to trouble you, but every craft coming in here to-night's being treated in the same way. Can't tell you more."

William and Harry had felt no desire to be told more. They had smuggled their drugs under the very nose of the police! Smiling at each other, they had tickled, turned, and swung the auxiliary into petulant life again, and had continued gaily on their way. They had landed at the coal wharf and between them, with much scraping and grunting, had hoisted ashore their slimy and precious box of mackerel. Only then had they noticed the group of men advancing from the shadows.

"What's that you've got there?" the burly leader had inquired.

"Fish. Just fish."

"Ho! Fish, eh? Indeed! We'd like to have a little look at them, wouldn't we, boys?"

A sticky damp had come to William's forehead. "Why?" he had asked.

"Me and the boys here," had answered the leader, "is a strike picket, and proud of it. You'll have to tip them fish back into the sea."

"Tip 'em—back into the sea?"

"Yes, mate. No food's going to pass this wharf, whether it's boxed, canned, or all alivo."

"But glory——"

"Come on, now. Tip 'em in! Jump to it! It's my job to see no food gets past this little bit of waterfront, and jingo, I'm seein' to it! Tip 'em in!"

William had stared at the burly leader, and he had stared at the box of mackerel. The big fish had been buried deep—no chance of a quick grab and a quick departure. The lusty forms of the half-dozen strikers had warned him, too, against the foolishness of violence. His face had grown pale.

"I'm taking them," he had said rashly, "right where I want them."

Immediately the men had bustled round him in no gentle manner. "You are, are you? Strike breaker, are you? Get hold of 'em boys, and show 'em where the road is. Show 'em quick! We'll see to the fish—Billy and I."

William and Harry had struggled furiously, but they had been playthings in the united hands of the strikers. They had been carried away, and in their ears had sounded the maddening "plop, plop," of the fish as they met the water. A fortune gone! All their work wasted—through the strike that they had calculated to help them!

The 'bus, coming to a stop, jerked William to reality again. He was in Blower Street. He alighted and entered the house of Mother Black. Explanation was a difficult business, but eventually he emerged into the road once more.

He found a man on either side of him. He found himself staring at papers. He found a cool band of steel round his wrist.

"Thank you," said one of the men, who had a tool bag over his shoulder. "I'll trouble you to come quietly. . . . I'll handcuff this fellow to you, Hunter. Take him direct to the station. I'm collecting those two uniformed men down the road and searching the house this chap's just come out of."

The blood left William's face. He felt himself growing weak in heart and weak in limb as he remembered the evidence awaiting the police in Mother Black's house—sufficient to convict him, and Harry, and Mother Black, and other men away in London. . . . How had it been found out? He had been followed, of course. The man in the brown suit had been a blind, standing there to give the signal when Harry and he had left their shed and—artful devil!—stopping there to make them feel secure! Perhaps Harry had been followed by two men too! Five tecs! What had been discovered to justify five tecs? How could anything have been discovered? The fish were at the bottom of the river. Their shed contained nothing that could incriminate them. Why had they been watched and followed?

"I can't understand what this is all about," he began.

"You've been charged and cautioned. No questions, please."

He was conducted to the police station. Harry was already there, handcuffed to another burly policeman and staring with anger at a roughly dressed dock hand.

"Is this them?" asked an inspector of the dock hand.

"That's them! Both of them!" The dock hand rubbed his chin with the satisfaction of an accident well justified. "Think of it! Me 'ol woman always growls at me for thinking too much of me stomach, but it's caught a couple of dirty dope-smugglers for you, anyhow!"

"Quiet, please," said the inspector.

William, by now, had turned even paler, for, with a sickening of his heart, he had recognised the dock hand. Billy! The man who had helped the burly strike leader last night! The man who had thrown the mackerel into the river!

Billy was chuckling. "Some of them fish were big 'uns," he said, "and too good to waste." He came near to William and laughed into his face. "I took two of 'em home for m' supper," he said.

Country Cameos — *S. L. Bensusan*

Home-Reared Game

I HAVE praised the plucky partridge that nested by the side of the drive and refused to be disturbed by cars and grass cutters; I have paid tribute to the pheasant that allowed me to pass within touch of her clutch several times a day, and even understood that Nelly, the lurcher, despises both fur and feather. There were other partridges and pheasants on the place; and they, too, have reared their families and shown a marked predilection for the immediate neighbourhood. This is quite easy to understand, Black Brook still goes singing to sunshine and starlight, and all the surrounding countryside is dry.

At first, I looked with interest upon the young pheasants and the baby partridges that followed; then the gardener waxed critical. "That's all you have left of fourteen dozen lettuce," he remarked, as he pointed to the eight survivors. "The pheasants have taken the rest."

Red cabbage is a vegetable I hold in high esteem; not pickled, mark you, but stewed with beef and served up on a cold day after a five-mile walk. Pheasants like red cabbages, too, and have signified the same in the usual manner.

Both partridge and pheasant are delighted to find a garden between two woods and in close proximity to cornfields. There were forty of the last-named birds by Black Brook the other morning, and one of the partridge coveys that devotes the early hours to theft is twenty-one strong.

We have kept rabbits at bay; by the time these lines can be printed the gardener's bag will run well into three figures in little more than three months; but, while fur is ceasing to be a menace, feather is a growing danger.

Even the wild pigeons that I suffer to nest peacefully in the fir trees turn and rend me, stripping rows of peas, while thrushes and blackbirds enjoyed far more of the strawberries and the bush fruit than I did. All these birds know that we like their company, and see that we pay for it.

"Would you rather have more fruit and vegetables and no birds?" I ask myself, and answer the query under my breath. It wouldn't do for the birds to hear.

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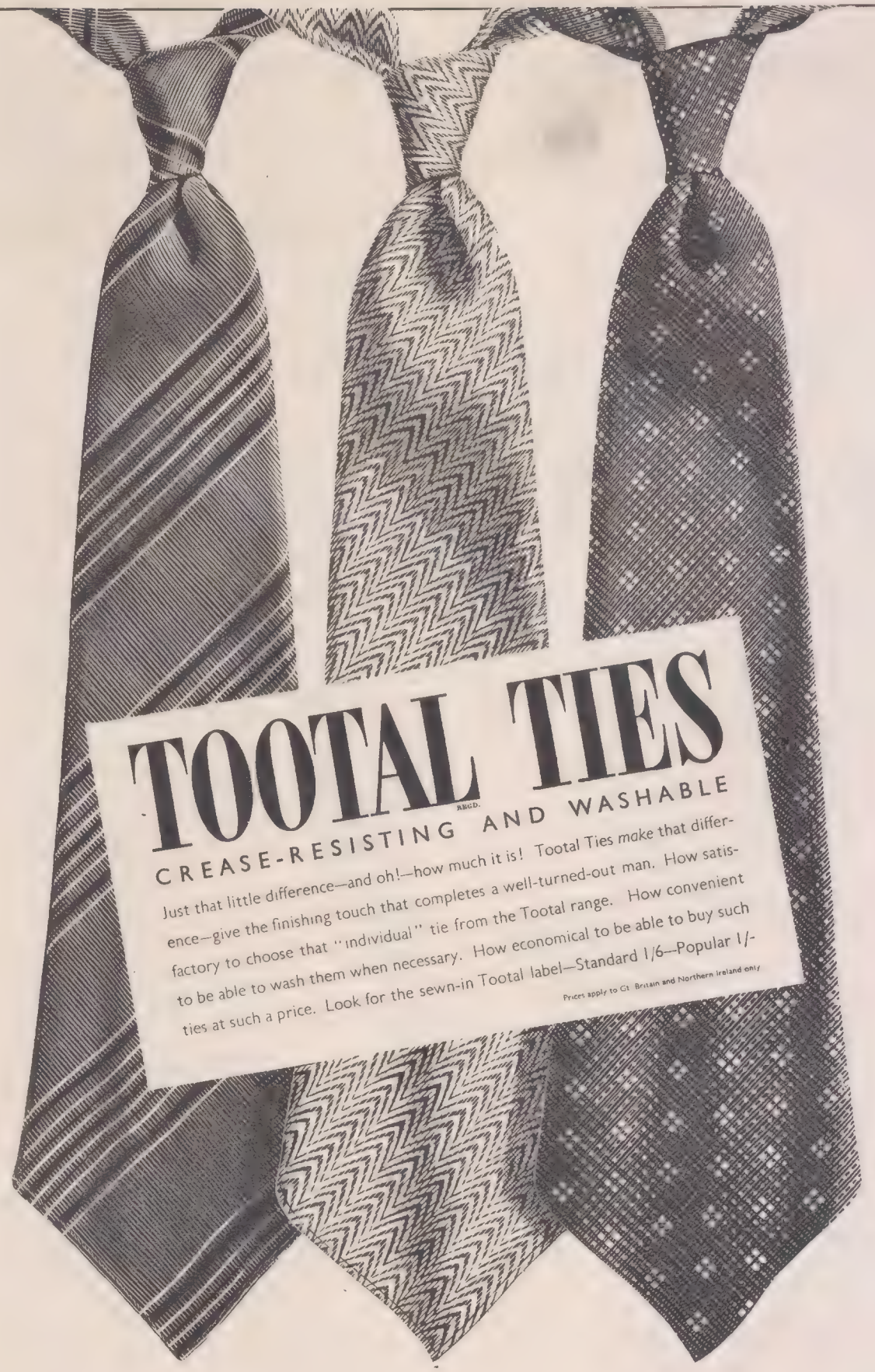

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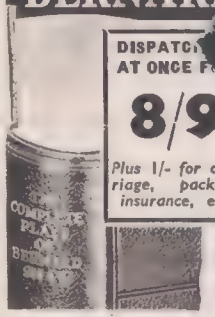

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'Quake

AS Helen said, "It could not go on." And I realised it. We had had it all out so often before. Time and time again breaking point had been reached—and passed—but this time it was final. Life together had become intolerable.

It was in India that this happened. A bare eighteen months ago.

Our married life had commenced happily enough. We were comfortably off and we spent the first two years entertaining and being entertained. My job gave me sufficient freedom to live well out in the country, away from London, and it seemed as though nothing would step in to spoil things.

But it did. Too much pleasure was the beginning. By the end of the second year I had begun to slip. Not content with evenings of revelry, I got into the fatal habit of taking odd half-hours off in the day. I had too many friends with too little to do and, before I realised what was happening, I had allowed drink and amusement to become my masters.

Drink came first. My wife, my home, and my job became secondary considerations. Had it not been for my wife's faith and determination, we should have parted then, but she was a fighter.

How she managed it, I don't know, but she contrived to have me transferred to the Indian branch of my firm. She realised that I would never pull myself up, so she threw up everything in this country for me, and we left.

But I was by then well on the downward path. The long boat trip, with nothing to do, did not help matters, and the hot climate added the finishing touch. By the time our child was eight months old, Helen and I were almost strangers. Our life had become a series of quarrels, partings, reunions, and more quarrels. And then came the climax.

My wife had decided that I was not worth the sacrifice, and I, for my part, was content to think that the continued unpleasantness was not worth the bother.

It was the evening of May 30, 1935. My wife and child had gone up to Quetta to stay with friends, and I had taken a fortnight off to join them. I was due to return in three days and, as I well knew, it was good-bye.

Every night had been a hectic repetition of all that I had promised so often to give up, and it was plain that there was no future for us.

We were alone in the bungalow that evening. Our host and hostess had gone to a party. It was a party in our honour, but my wife had refused to go. I knew why, and I was very annoyed.

"If you go, you go," she said, "and I am through with you. Ruin your own life if you must, but you shall not do us any more harm."

However, I was in no mood to think in those terms. Finally, after a long and futile argument, I lost my temper. I said, "Well, if that's what you want, I don't mind. I'm going, even if I have to go alone."

She shrugged her shoulders. "Very well," she said. "Go if you must."

I went. I changed hastily, and still in a bad temper. And I remember well trying to convince myself as I dressed, that I had at last got what I wanted; that I was glad. I got out the car and drove round to the bungalow. The party was in full swing and I received a warm welcome. But somehow I could not enjoy myself. I had one or two drinks, but I could not rouse the party spirit. I suppose it was the aftermath of my selfishness and the thought of my wife at home by herself. I don't know. But, after about three-quarters of an hour, I excused myself and left.

My wife was in bed when I got in, but I did not have to wake her.

"I'm so glad you've come back," she said; "I was hoping you would."

I made some gruff reply then. Three hours later I was thanking every power that is that I had acted as I did. For the first night out of ten I went to bed absolutely clear-headed. I was asleep almost at once.

What an awakening! There was no warning. A lurch, and my bed was being shaken as though a giant was holding it. One split second brought me from sleep to furious action.

"Quick!" I shouted. "Earthquake!" And I was thrown across the room as soon as my feet touched the floor. As I picked myself up I saw the wardrobe rocking towards me. I pushed it back. Out of the corner of my eye I saw my wife stumble out of her bed and run for the door.

In the same split second the peaceful night was an inferno of crashing din, as the world went mad. The walls rocked, cracked, and commenced to fall. The galvanised iron roof banged and creaked with the deafening noise of tumbling bricks and straining joints.

In another split second I was at the window, tearing at the bolts which held the mosquito gauze screen. They were stuck. Even as I tugged the very frame swayed to and fro. I saw my wife fall, hurled to the ground, three times before she reached the door. That, too, was jammed.

There was a second window beyond the other bed. Desperately I raced for it. Something hit me as I moved away. But I did not feel more than a jar. I was possessed. I tore at the other window catch. Stuck! Punching my fist through the glass, I reached the screen bolts. I was on the veranda, pulling my wife after me.

How many seconds, I don't know. Five, ten, a minute, five minutes, a year? It was eternity. The world still shook. The noise was one continuous, fiendish din. We were safe. The child!

Round to the back. Hopeless. A ruin. The walls still stood, rocking, but the roof was half down. Clouds of dust from brick and mortar floated everywhere. Round to the side. Hopeless again. A heap of tangled and tumbling masonry and

"Gently, fearfully inch by inch we raised the tangle . . . Still not a sound!"

Warning

beams. Even had it been possible to scramble in, one could not have hoped to emerge alive. The thought was there, naturally: not a brave instinct; a natural instinct to save something as dear as life itself. But it was out of the question. One could only wait.

The world stopped rocking, then shook again. The noise died down to break out afresh. Tremor after tremor brought with it fresh havoc in its train. Above the noise came more terrible sounds. From near and from far away came shrieks and groans. From the distance, above the pall of dust, or through it, came the terrible red glow of fire.

And then for a moment the world was still. The native servants were all round us, though we had hardly noticed their coming. Brave men, they came with us as, cautiously, we moved through the wreckage, scarcely daring to breathe. Matches were our only light—and there were but a few of them. The clouds of dust made it impossible to see more than a couple of feet ahead.

Every tremor brought down more masonry. Every crash meant a leap for life. The flickering matches in that eerie chaos showed bulging roof, cracking timbers, and widening gaps between walls and iron.

At last we reached the child's room. No one spoke. There was not a sound. The head of the cot was visible. Across the middle of the bed, slantwise from inside wall to floor, lay a beam and a mass of rubble. The cot, broken-backed, canted crazily. There was not a sound.

Gently, fearfully, inch by inch, we raised the tangle. Piece by piece we pulled away the debris. Every moment was liable to bring further disaster. Still not a sound.

And then a shout—no, more like a whispered shout—the child! He was alive! Miraculously, by ten hundred miracles, he had escaped. Somehow, only God knows, the falling beam had broken the cot and left him untouched.

The three of us safe on the lawn, we sat down to think. What had happened? Thought had been out of the question in those mad minutes. Thought was the only thing from then on. What were we to do? What had happened to others? What could we do for them? It was night. Early morning. Soon it would be day. What then?

That was the most important thought. Though the night was cool, the coming day—for there was to be another day after all—would bring the sun. Cover. Protection. Topees! They were the most important of all.

Gingerly, inch by inch, I crept back into what remained of our room, throwing whatever I could find through the window. And it was then that I realised to the full how narrow had been my escape. I had felt something hit me as I ran from one window to the other. I saw then what it was. I tried to tug a blanket from the bed, but it would not move. *It was held down by about a ton of bricks.*

Half clothed, bruised, shocked, and weary, we waited for the dawn. And surely the sun never before blazed down on such a pitiful ruin. Clever as any writer might be, that scene of chaos and destruction would be beyond his powers of description.

Quetta was flat. Quetta was non-existent.

How many perished? No one will ever know. Official figures say 30,000. Or is it 40,000? Call it 60,000 and under estimate. Quetta at that season held many times its normal population.

It is not for me to dwell upon all the horrors that followed. They are out of the province of this story. For me is the knowledge that I escaped death by more than mere inches, and my wife with me.

Almost more important, in escaping death I had found something else. Though I have said that thought was impossible during the upheaval, I realise that it was not. The very frenzy of action was but the result of unconscious thought. I was losing more than life itself. I was losing all that mattered to me. Now we were safe, and everything was mine.

I remember putting my arm around my wife in those first endless minutes of safety, and I remember the look she gave me. I remember saying, "I'm sorry, Helen." I remember her reply: "That's all right, Bob."

Sorry? My heart was aching with gladness. I had missed death by split seconds, but I knew in that second that I was a changed man. I knew in that second that, more than anything, I wanted everything that, for years, I had done my best to lose.

Had that tragedy overtaken Quetta on any of the preceding days, I should not have been here. Sleeping heavily, inalert, death would have come to me.

We are back in England now, and I hope for good. It would take more than an earthquake to upset our lives to-day.

HAPPY DREAMS

JONES was lunching with friends. He was tracing with the handle of his fork a marvellous little resort where he had spent his holidays. Hurrying back to the office, his mind still full of golden sands and sparkling waves, he failed to notice an onrushing car. Jones ate his next meal in hospital. He had broken his collar bone.

It was fortunate that he was a regular reader of THE PASSING SHOW and had safeguarded himself against everyday perils by signing the forms for its Free Family Insurance. The result was the prompt payment to him of a generous cheque under the Street Accident Section of our Free Family Insurance Scheme.

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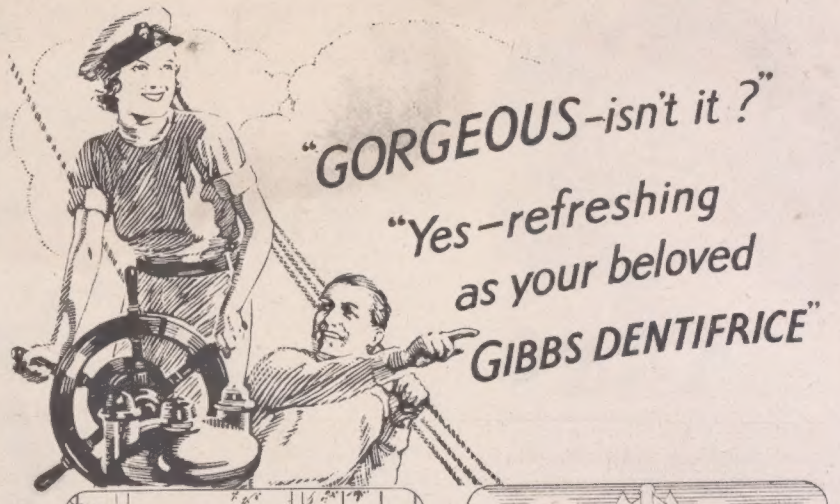
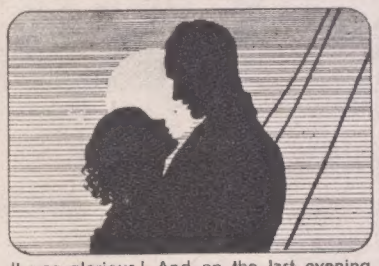


Spending a week-end at Ann's, Sara met Ann's dentist brother, Derek. "Don't let him bore you with shop," admonished Ann. But Sara was like any other pretty girl!

"Do tell me," she urged, "What should I clean my teeth with?" "I always use Gibbs Dentifrice," Derek replied. "Gibbs is antiseptic, doesn't scratch, and does clean thoroughly."

Sara bought some Gibbs—with delightful results to her teeth! Running into her in Regent Street, Derek thought, "I'll suggest Ann asks her to join our yachting party!"


It was glorious! And on the last evening Derek proposed. "It's love at second sight," he said. "I can't think why not first!" But Sara knew! "I wasn't using Gibbs then" she thought.

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You're Telling Us!

THERE was a time when, in the words of the cynic, Sunday was a day given over to wishing you were in heaven and your neighbours were in hell; now it is given over to golf. Men and Women, otherwise sane, even intelligent, have left the river and the open road and the roundabouts at Blackpool to join in the anti-social practice of forcibly pushing a ball around a golf course.

We expressed no surprise when a scholarly gentleman with a face the colour of old mahogany dropped in on his way around the world to say that he had met a meditative friar in a rock monastery in Tibet who in his youth had ambitiously decided to become a saint by pushing a pea around India; we explained that to atone for the sins of our forefathers we had chased a drop of gutta percha in our youth around the heather-clad hills of the far north but there was still as much chance of our becoming a saint as there was of Hitler becoming a rabbi.

Our fiery-faced visitor departed so hurriedly for a more religious part of the world that we were unable to tell him that at one time we were so pure in heart that rather than disfigure the face of Mother Earth we would retrace our steps to replace a divot. Our first toy was a mashie and when eventually we were lifted from the cradle we were given a niblick and a bunker instead of a bucket and spade.

Our happy childhood hours were spent looking for balls lost in the heather. It was up to us to play golf or be forever damned. And because of a horrid slice that neither fasting nor fervent blasphemy could cure we had to be forever damned.

AND THEN, AS though to pour salt in wounds that even the years have failed to heal, Stewart Beveridge, a fine wee laddie of Dundee, Angus, asks: "Are you a golfer?" The kick in this particular Beveridge, who seems to have all the signs of the greatest leveller of mankind. You're telling us, Stewart? Our trouble was that there was no level to which we could sink once we settled in a bunker.

"On the first tee, it matters not whether you are king or cadger, duke or dustman, errand boy or editor, down in the dust you must go," says Stewart. "What a pleasure it is to see the office terror and the drawing-room dandy crawling mournfully along the fairway after sclaffing their drives and then to watch the timid creature who cleans the boss's inkpots and sharpens the typists' pencils smacking a 'beezer' up the middle. It just shows you.

"Then you never hear of a Dictator playing golf," adds Stewart. "Imagine the sensation if Adolf or Benito muffed their drives in front of the Faithful. Surely golf would be a dictator's nightmare."

Purple tie with yellow spots

With those kind thoughts off his conscience, Stewart stalks Back to the Highlands itching to smack a beezer up the fairway. He's the sort of bloke who makes us feel cadaverous, undersized examples of what can happen to an anthropoid ape with ambition.

'TWAS THE MIGHTY Kipling who conceived a distich or two as to flannelled fools and muddied oafs of English sports, but it has been left to P. O'Donnel, of Herne Bay, to chant a diatribe on this other national disease that even lures men from the cricket pitch and the crown and anchor board in the directors' room. To the tune of his lyre he sings:

He followed it with eagle eye
And leaped from mound to mound
He chased it 'neath the noonday sky
Across the uneven ground
His limbs were as the storm-clouds fleet
And, broiling tho' the day
He sped unwearied by the heat,
Intent upon his prey.
Thro' undergrowth and bramble screen
He followed, eyes alight.
Exhausted then thro' tangled bush
It crept along until
Into a clearing green and lush
It rolled and then lay still.
The hunter followed on apace,
And, with one last wild dash, he
Leaped out before it, fierce of face
And smote it with his mashie.

Such a blast of golfing music may set many a rabbit's blood on fire just as the lyrics of Kipling sent young men out to incomprehensible wars to be killed horribly in far-off places, but personally we prefer our golfers to stick to golf, leaving the poets to their primeval habit of writing recessionals and odes to buttercups.

HAVING AT TIMES suffered unaccountably in the midst of golfers we are inclined to agree with Mr. Rutherford, a canny soul who believes that wise men pause before crossing cheques, main roads and women.

"Golfers bore me stiff with their talk and their airs of superiority over other sportsmen," says he. "Cricketers can be irritating with their talk of bowling and batting records, but they mean well and they are a genial crew. But what is there in having a small boy carry a quiverful of clubs with which to beat a small ball until it eventually rolls in a hole? Such a sport calls for no exertion beyond the gentle swing of the club; there is no running, or danger or any of the manly attributes that are necessary in other games."

Instead of a bucket and spade

Yet we feel that friend Rutherford may be rather unfair in pinning this accusation only on the plus-fours of golfers; surely one may let fly with the same ammunition at fishermen, rat-catchers, autograph hunters and adipose plethoric old men who are wheeled in bath chairs to a suitable spot on the moors from where they can become mechanical slayers.

Golfers must be given their due; if you think it is easy to walk up to a tiny white ball and clout it with an instrument that feels, once you have it in your hands about as clumsy a piece of machinery as ever you handled, in the hope that eventually the aforesaid little white ball will rest in a hole several hundred yards away, you have all the makings of an optimist.

TALKING OF OPTIMISTS, let us introduce Mr. N. Snaith, of Kendal, who wants to insure against his aunt sending him a purple tie with yellow spots. "Christmas may not be imminent," he suggests, "but harassed gift-buyers will be in its toils all too soon.

"Every person should have an information card available for inspection at the town hall. This would prevent the difficult subterfuge now necessary to unearth the size of A's gloves, of B's stockings and C's taste in braces and pyjamas; no longer would the shops be filled after Christmas with conscience-stricken people trying to change bath salts for hot-water bottles. On the cards of my desire you would have sizes, likes and dislikes on the dotted line."

Except that such a scheme would undoubtedly send the rates up according to the thousands of people who would be needed after the manner of all municipal enterprises to see that (*a*) the cards were filed so that they could never be found, and (*b*) that you would have to wait at least an hour before receiving official attention if you asked to look at a lost card, we can find little to say against the scheme. It would at least prevent honourable ancestors looking at you as though you were the horizon when you asked whether they liked the "whatsit" you so humbly submitted for their acceptance.

SERVICE

—on every practical subject is given free by "The Passing Show" Advice Service, 93 Long Acre, London, W.C.2. Enclose stamped envelope with query.

Solution Next Week

CLUES DOWN

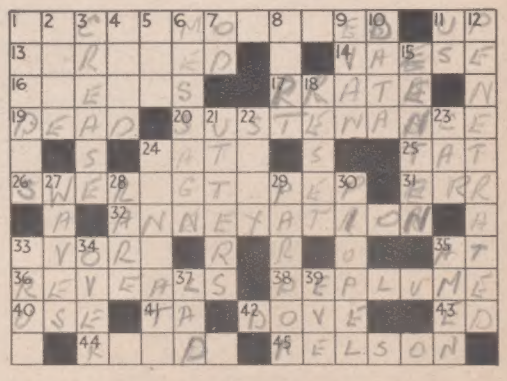
1. Proceeds with lejsurely gait.
2. To cover with wax.
3. May be a line in trousers.
4. Perhaps ill-boding.
5. Means much the same as 17.
6. Duty on which one is sent.
7. Do in this fashion is largely singular.
8. A mining term.
9. Part of church upended for Welshman.
10. Stuff from which to theorise.
11. Two-thirds of 40.
12. Deep rat net (anagram).
15. Pertaining to part of church calendar.
18. Something placed again.
21. Gives voice to.
22. No more rivers after this.
23. Take care. Maybe dangerous (hidden).
24. Winged.
27. Sea fluxions.
28. Not of frequent occurrence.
29. Apologetic word.
30. Drive away.
33. A quick movement for Sussex river.
34. This is above.
35. Concluding word.
37. No lady, but almost.
39. Take the woman from 36.

S	P	A	S	M		C	A	S	T	E	L	L	A
E	R	S	T		F	A	R	O		N	O	O	S	E
N	E	P	O	T	I	S	M		D	O	W	S	E
T	E	E	M		N	E	S	C	I	E	N	C	E
E	N	R	A	G	E	D		A		A		H	R	H
N		I	T			S	P	R	O	U	T		
C	A	T	A	S	T	R	O	P	H	E		R		P
E		Y		P		N	A	I	A	D		C		A
	O		P	A	T		T	A	R		A	H	O	Y
A	B	B	O	T		R	E	N	O	W	N		R	
N	E	E	D	E	D		N		S	E	D	A	T	E

Solution to last week's puzzle

CLUES ACROSS

1. Requirements presumably satisfied.
11. Not in lower spheres.
13. May be called from vasty deep.
14. Vales take a turn in Parisian ballroom.
16. Strains.
17. Not a fully-fledged pirate.
19. May be so from lack of 20.
20. Take it if you wish to live.
24. He was a statesman.
25. Tit for this.
26. Printers' word which in common parlance denotes general pattern.
31. Human frailty.
32. Tax on Annie (anagram).
33. Give added beauty.
35. 41 reversed.
36. Discloses.
38. Take feathers from an ostrich.
40. Put into action.
41. Half of 10 for an objectionable thank you.
42. Noah's messenger.
43. Boss in brief.
44. Take the flora from 16.
45. Trafalgar Square figure.



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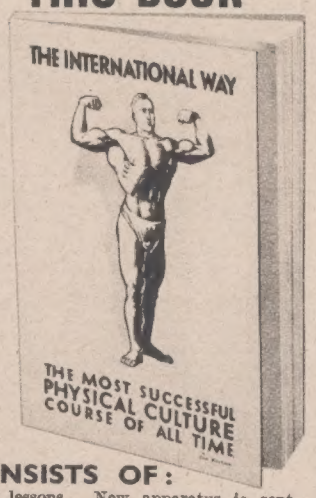

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J. T. Garrick: Increased 10 in. and 8 lb. in weight.

L. D. O. Leo, Gledhill, Halifax: Increases 12 lb. in weight.

S. Oliver, Lincoln: Gains 1½ in. chest, 1 in. on each biceps and 100 per cent. improvement.

R. G. Stadman, Anfield: Gained 1 st. 6 lb. in weight, 3½ in. chest, 1 in. biceps, 2 in. thighs, and 3 in. calves.

L. Rose, Nottingham: Gained 2 st., 3 in. each biceps, 5 in. chest, 1½ in. neck, 2 in. forearm.

E. Harvey, Birmingham: Increases in 21 days, 11 lb., biceps 1½ in., etc., etc.

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R. McNeff, North Kensington: I have not only gained huge measurements but robust health. Gained 7 lb. in weight, 3½ in. chest, 1 in. neck, 2 in. each biceps, 1½ in. forearm.

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D. V. Owens, Summerhill: 100 per cent. fit and increased 7 in.

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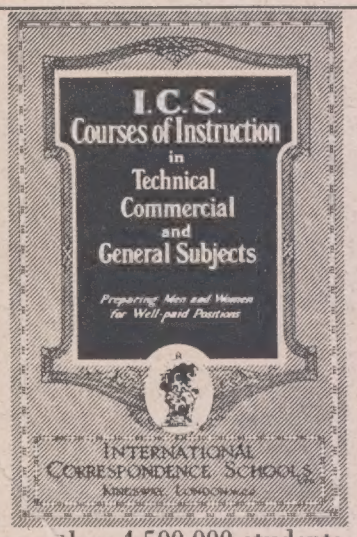

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